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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

JANUARY, 1916

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The Karma of Nations

IF we hold to the view put forward in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for October, 1915, concerning the war: that it is in reality a gigantic, hidden battle waged between the White Lodge and the Black, the Powers of Light and the Powers of Darkness; and if we ponder over this, we shall see that, inevitably, the spirit of every nation involved in the war must be tried to the uttermost; that hidden virtues, as well as hidden sins, will be brought unfailingly to light; that, for long spaces of time to come, the nations will have to abide by their showing in this war. Their own delusions concerning themselves will count for nothing. What the Great Lodge sees them to be, that they are; and they must stand to that and reap the consequences. This is one reason why the war perhaps will be long, longer than any of us may at present expect. It is necessary that the process of fermentation, of melting, shall be complete. The High Gods, having set the piece, will see that it is played out to the end.

It will follow, too, that if a nation or a group of nations have given themselves up, to be the agents of the Black Lodge in this momentous struggle—if they have deliberately chosen cruelty and foulness, treachery and lying—then no more terrible Karma could well be conceived. What it implies in the long run, we may, perhaps, show by a similitude: There is, in a certain corner of the world, a region, the people of which, after attaining a very high degree of material and political civilization, did that very thing: surrendered themselves as a nation to the terrible powers of evil. As a nation, they were swept away. Their very name is forgotten. But the region they inhabited, once a very paradise on earth, is now a rank and ghastly desert, where grow only poisonous plants and evil growths set with thorns, while the life of it, what life there is,

consists of scorpions, noxious insects, poisonous creeping things. Nature has cursed the place, so that no benign life can find a place there. And thus it must remain, until the time of purification be fulfilled.

So, too, all those who give themselves up to the Black Lodge, whether by direct participation or by countenancing that which they know to be evil, must go through long periods of woe, until, as the result of their suffering, comes realization of the wrong they have done, and then repentance and restitution, followed by rehabilitation, slow and arduous, climbing three steps for every step they took downward.

For the nation or nations, then, that have opened wide their doors to the powers of evil—and not one man or woman is numbered among those nations, save by his or her Karma, his or her free and deliberate choice in some moral crisis—the punishment will and must be dire. They have sinned against humanity, for they have ranged themselves on the side of the ruthless, devilish foes of humanity, who, without these treasons in the human ranks, would have small power to harm; they have sinned against themselves; for the choice they have made, involves the worst self-prostitution; they have sinned against the White Lodge; for, in the last analysis, it is the effort and suffering of the White Lodge that checks the onrush of their sin.

And in the compassion of the White Lodge lies their only hope. Let them never ask for justice. Justice, for them, would mean damnation. Let them ask for mercy. Let them throw themselves on the pity of the Holy Powers. That is their one door of salvation.

Of necessity, then, there must be in store for these nations such punishment as shall make them cry to Heaven for mercy. Only thus can the divine law be fulfilled. And as it can scarcely be hoped that the present war will go deep enough to wring their hearts to repentance through the ultimate misery, we must face the grim fact that yet other wars may come, with the same antagonists, until the measure of the Gods shall be fulfilled. Future generations, if their punishment be inadequate now, will treacherously follow the same evil hopes. Future generations of those who oppose them now, will, if faithful, once more oppose them, and bring them chastisement. Only if that chastisement be drastic and convincing, convicting them to themselves of evil, is there any possibility, under the divine law, that these recreant nations may survive as nations, and escape complete disintegration.

But it is of vital importance to remember this: the fiery melting heat of this great Karmic hour will bring forth to the daylight whatever lies hidden in other nations also, whether of good or evil; whether these nations be combatants or neutrals. And the nations that have, to their

own thinking, "done nothing," holding aloof, whether from sheer cowardice or through some of the self-deceptions of vanity, may find that, on the contrary, they have done much—towards their own degradation. It is written: Inaction in a deed of mercy is action in a deadly sin; and there are nations that, falling under the pall of sanctimonious cowardice, have been deaf to the appeal of suffering and sorrow, standing aloof, washing their hands with the great historic "neutral."

So of the belligerents; that which was hidden, shall be revealed. What was told in secret shall be cried aloud from the housetops. Such terrible searching power has the dread Karmic law. Let us try, then, to view the Karma of certain of the nations, as the fires of trial are already revealing it.

Take the case of the British Empire. First, the unity of that Empire, of its constituent parts, India, the Dominions beyond the sea, the recently organized Union of South Africa, has shown itself immensely stronger, more firmly rooted, deeper, than its enemies hoped and believed. That unity fundamentally rests on a tremendous moral principle: on reverence for law, on obedience to law, and, in a lesser degree, on the worship of a freedom founded upon law. It was, in the last analysis, to uphold the law of righteousness among nations, the supreme law of honour so grossly violated, that the British Empire went to war; and it was precisely because they profoundly and reverently recognize this, that the Dominions beyond the sea have risen so finely to the occasion absolutely tearing to shreds the delusion of discord, so greedily, so foolishly believed and propagated by their enemies.

Take the case of India, the land for which all lovers of the Sacred Science feel so deep a reverence, the home-country of so many of the Great Ones. All India must know, from the premier Prince of the Empire, ruling a kingdom equal to any in the west, to the humblest ryot, the peasant wading knee-deep in his rice fields—what they owe to the English genius for conservation. Nations, peoples, tribes, customs, religions, all has been preserved, as a sacred trust, by the English Governors of India; and when the day dawns for India to take up once again her sacred birthright, as a great spiritual power, it will be acknowledged that to England she owes the continued possession of her national genius.

Take the great Dominions, Canada, South Africa, Australia, each of which owes its Constitution, its organic law, to the lawmaking power and genius of England. These great Dominions—the nations of coming centuries—know with entire lucidity what they owe to the Empire, and

to their share in the great destiny of the Empire. Therefore with deliberate, conscious choice they have set themselves on the side of the Powers of Righteousness; for reverence for law, for the obligation and bond of honour, is a fundamental principle of the Great White Lodge.

But the fiery, penetrating Karma of the war, the "melting heat of trial," has brought to the surface great weakness as well as wonderful strength. There has been the imperial sense, underlying everything, and able to rise to a vast opportunity; but there has been deplorable bickering under fire; there have been shameful campaigns of self-advertisement, under the guise of higher patriotism; there has been,—and this is, perhaps, the worst element brought to light in England,—an entirely base and unworthy attitude, gross selfishness and coarse self-seeking, in those very classes which recent legislation has sedulously sought to favour. Socialistic legislation has brought the Nemesis which always dogs the footsteps of that materialistic, self-seeking movement; those to whom the hand was given, have greedily tried to seize the whole arm; in this showing the inspiration and motive-power of him for whom that proverb was first made.

Another grave weakness which the war has brought to light in England: a seeming inability really to appreciate, really to meet, the great strategic problems of the war, a lack of the spiritual imagination without which there has never been a great soldier. If we are right in our conjecture that this is, in the deepest sense, the Lodge's war, then the English fighting generals stand accused of a failure to grasp the plans of the Lodge, of a certain blindness and obtuseness to direct and insistent spiritual leadings. Is not the explanation this: that, through lazy, overfed generations, these men, with all their reverence for law, with all their genuine reverence for honour, have been very incurious concerning spiritual life and the spiritual world; and therefore have, in a certain degree, deadened and dulled their inner eyes, their power to perceive clearly the things of the Spirit?

Yet even here their fate, their standing in the sight of Karmic law, is infinitely happier than that of those who did diligently seek the laws of invisible things—in order to prostitute them to evil uses, just as they pored, in a kind of demoniac devotion, over the mysteries of science, of mechanics, of psychology—in order to discover new poisons, new instruments of cruelty, new and fiendish terrorisms. Compared with this alert mood of evil, the sleepy nonchalance of the too fortunate Englishman is something to be envied.

It is impossible to pass from considering Britain, without a word, at least, concerning the sister island which, in a very remote past, had

certain high elements of spiritual greatness, long obscured by an effervescent, treacherous vanity. There has been a good showing there, far more loyalty, far more effective courage, than the prophets of evil hoped; but much, very much, is yet lacking, before one can say that the national life there is well and firmly laid. There has been good promise, hardly more.

To come next to that nation among the friends of law and honour which holds an Empire almost rivalling that of England in its vast expanses, and which is the home of the largest, and in some ways, the most homogeneous, of all the white nations. Here, great weaknesses, and very brilliant gifts, have been brought to light in almost equal measure. We shall put our fingers on the worst, the most dangerous of the weaknesses, when we speak of that failure of personal honour, that blindness to the obligation of personal honesty, which manifests itself in wholesale bribe-seeking, in the foul and deeply corrupt habit of seeking a dishonourable personal profit in the needs and exigencies of the nation. One must say that, in part because the nation is still so young, so undeveloped, so elemental, in part because there was lacking in its history the epoch of chivalry, which laid such splendid stress upon personal honour, upon disinterested service of an ideal, upon clean hands in every obligation, the individual consciousness of this great nation has not yet been aroused and attuned to the demands of spiritual law. There are not yet men enough among its millions, who can be trusted to handle large responsibilities in the pure spirit of duty.

But, on the other hand, there has been, throughout the whole of that great nation, a high religious fervor, which has perfectly interpreted the vast spiritual issues of this war; which has seen the Light, and has preferred the Light to the Darkness. And, if these have been far too few among its administrators and their agents who have put in practice a high ideal of personal rectitude, there have, on the other hand, been millions among the simple manhood of the nation, who have given up their lives cheerfully, gallantly, with fine forgetfulness of self, knowing that they have given their lives for the same cause as did the Master whom, as a nation, they fervently worship. And, just because of this strong devotion, they have had put upon them the national trial,—outwardly the direct cause of which was inpreparedness and slipshodness in the purchase of munitions of war—seeing their armies beaten in the field, their fortresses beaten down, their territories occupied. It will be well if this great object-lesson be taken to heart, and the very serious weakness which causes it, courageously rooted out.

But, even in this there have not been present the elements of evil vanity, of treacherous envy, of cruelty and tyrannous terrorism, the

deep sins against God and man which give such ready access to the Dark Powers: those Dark Powers whose only purpose is, to kill every vestige of the spiritual life of humanity, since every spark of spirituality in mankind is the threat of their own inexorable extinction.

There are smaller nations in the war, which have, nevertheless, been great in suffering, great also in that unconquerable valour which is dear to the Masters' hearts. According to their suffering will be the measure of their purification, and therefore the measure of their reward. And even if their manhood be more than decimated, even if only a remnant be left, we must remember that those who have passed through the purifying fires of valiant and valorous death, because of a fiery love of their nation and a fierce resentment of brutal and ruthless bullying, will be held in the magnetic aura of their country, every ounce of their gallant patriotism counting in the struggle, and they themselves enabled with the supreme advantage of that purification, to finish the work that they have so gallantly begun.

There is one region of the war-zone which has, from Karmic causes, a special significance: that region which belongs, or belonged very recently, to the Turkish Empire, from Egypt, through Palestine, to Constantinople and Macedonia. For ages, this region has been what one may call a colonial territory of the Egyptian Lodge. The Egyptian Initiates told some of its older secrets to Solon, from whom they were passed on to Plato, and recorded by him in his story of Atlantis. Then, in the period which closed with Plato himself, very much was accomplished, very much more was attempted, through the earlier spiritual life of Greece. Then again, four centuries after Plato, came the Western Avatar, once more closely connected with the Egyptian Lodge, and, so to say, seeking to reincarnate, in the field of the Roman Empire, the substantive life of the Egyptian Lodge.

As a part of that effort, the apostle Paul, an agent of the Egyptian Lodge, worked over very much of this southeastern battle-zone; Neapolis, where he landed in answer to the Macedonian cry, is the port of Kavala on the Ægean; Philippi, where he sat by the river-bank, speaking of the mysteries that burned in his heart, was on the river now called, in Turkish, Kara-Su, the Black Water; Philippi, which served him so loyally in the days of his bondage, and to which he wrote a letter that is immortal:

"Now ye men of Philippi know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity . . . Rejoice in the

Master always: and again I say, Rejoice. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Two milleniums do not exhaust the potency of a blessing such as that, uttered by Paul with authority, in his hieratic character.

The Thessalonica of which Paul speaks is, of course, the Saloniki or Salonica where the armies of the western nations are even now seeking their entrance into Macedonia; and to the disciples there, Paul wrote, not one letter but two: "Thessalonians, ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad. . . . Now the Master of Peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all. The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. . . . "

Of Athens, much the same thing may be said now, that was said and thought by Paul himself. Yet the whole of this region is, as we have expressed it, colonial territory of the Egyptian Lodge. That is a Karma which does not readily exhaust itself, and there are always possibilities of resurrection. But we can see at once that this must mean, first, a very thorough tilling and harrowing of the soil, and the burning up of many weeds and growths, coarse and rank. Among the group of little nations there, are treacheries, vanities, evil ambitions, cruelties. Each must bring its Karmic punishment, and, if the soil is indeed to be prepared for new effort of the Lodge, as may be the case, then the purification will have to be as drastic as the trials of discipleship; as drastic as the trials which Paul the disciple suffered, in these very cities: "And the multitudes rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison. . . ."

Therefore we may perhaps expect to see the tide of war, and of suffering, ebb and flow there for some considerable time to come. And, as to the issue, we may bethink ourselves that there are few sins the Lodge punishes so unsparingly as treachery. For that sin is of the very essence of the Powers of Evil.

We come now, at the last, to the one power that, from the burning, fiery furnace of trial, has come forth resplendent; the power whose superb spiritual qualities,—even now being manifested to all the world, and, to the world's lasting credit, being largely recognized,—point to its being the world's dominant nation for long epochs to come. Of that power, one can at last speak with enthusiastic admiration and gratitude, as being the well-tempered and tested and splendidly effective sword in the Master's hand. No praise is too great; no promise for the future

so high, that such a land cannot realize it; nay, surpass it; for France is but on the threshold of her superb regeneration. There, in her heart and in her shining and resplendent soul, lies the hope of humanity, in the days to come.

It may be possible for a nation to go through a deep, interior change, without the world at large being conscious of it. But the noteworthy thing about France is the suddenness and completeness with which all who have seen her soldiers have awakened to the same profoundly enthusiastic admiration for them, and, what is even more significant, have seen the tremendous spiritual impulse that is revealing the real heart of France. Even the most neutral nation—with no high inspiration of valour of its own—has chosen just this time to unveil a statue, in its greatest city, of the Maid of France; and Rudyard Kipling, never inclined to admire foreigners, has declared that he felt inclined to kneel before the common soldiers of the army of France.

But a more striking testimony, because going deeper and piercing more to the root of things, is that of Edith Wharton, who has just published a noteworthy book concerning the war. Mrs. Wharton tells us that, on the eve of the first attack by the enemy the universal French attitude was indicated in the words, "We don't want war—mais il faut que cela finisse!" "This eternal menace has got to stop!" With that determination the French went to their task, and it has been the backbone of their calm valour ever since. But the "tone of France," as Mrs. Wharton calls it, has come through several phases. The first days of the war were full of a kind of unrealizing confidence; not boastful or fatuous, yet very different from the clear-headed tenacity into which it had developed a few months later. Self-restraint was the most notable characteristic of the people. The crowd that stood looking at the first captured German flag was silent, as if already realizing what it would cost to keep it and add others to it.

"After six months of fighting, the French soldiers in the trenches, even the youngest, impressed the author as having a look of quiet authority. All their little oddities, meannesses, and vulgarities had been burnt away in a great flame of self-dedication.

"One of the most striking of Mrs. Wharton's observations is, that, even in these few months, the very faces of Frenchmen are changed. She was impressed by this all along the Western front; it forced itself upon her mind again in the Vosges mountains. Not only were all artificial barriers between men of different social classes broken down, but their mental and moral fraternity was complete. 'They were all fairly young, and their faces had the look that war has given to French

faces—a look of sharpened intelligence, strengthened will, and sobered judgment, as if every faculty, trebly vivified, were so bent on the one end that personal problems had been pushed back to the vanishing point of the great perspective. . . . In the dusk of the forest that look followed us down the mountain, and as we skirted the edge of the ravine between the armies, we felt that on the far side of that dividing line were the men who had made the war, and on the near side the men who had been made by it.'"

This searching and heart-stirring testimony is the more worthy of careful consideration, because Mrs. Wharton is, by nature, of a somewhat dry and sceptical spirit; and because she has already written admirably of France, as France appeared before her great initiation. What that initiation has accomplished, Mrs. Wharton wonderfully expresses: As the slow months have dragged by, bringing a calamity unheard of in human annals, the white glow of dedication throughout France has not waned, but has gradually deepened into exaltation, energy, the hot resolve to dominate the disaster. Mrs. Wharton does not deny that there have been faltering notes, mothers and widows for whom a single grave has turned the conflict into an idiot's tale. But there have not been enough of these to change the national tone. The vast majority hide their despair and seem to say of the great national effort: "Though it slay me, yet will I trust in it." This, says the author, is the finest triumph of France; that its myriad fiery currents flow from so many hearts made insensible by suffering, that so many dead hands feed its undying lamp.

It is again noteworthy that even to write of France has deepened and transformed the spirit of this recorder, pouring new spiritual life into her veins. A like transformation has been wrought in many Frenchmen, who, in past years, have done much, in their writings, to obscure the genuine spirit of France. Among these, none has written better than Commander Viaud ("Pierre Loti"), the somewhat over-ripe sentimentality of whose books has been turned into a pure spiritual flame. Within the last few weeks, Pierre Loti wrote the paragraphs with which we shall close these Notes and Comments:

"When we meet, on the station platforms where men are entraining for the front, some young woman keeping back the tears in eyes full of anguish and of courage, with a little child in her arms, come to give a last greeting to a soldier in the dress of the trenches, let us say: he whose return will be so longed for—the enemy's grapeshot doubtless awaits him to-morrow, to cast him nameless, among thousands of others, in one of those charnel-heaps that are the delight of the enemy, and which that enemy only longs to fill once more!

"Especially when we see passing, in their brand-new blue uniforms, our 'younger classes,' our beloved sons, who go forth so magnificently, with proud joy in their young eyes and with bouquets of roses in the muzzles of their guns, oh! let us plan our holy vengeance against those who are lying in wait for them, over there,—and against the great accursed one, *who has night for a soul!* . . .

"From this vaulted redoubt, where we are at this moment, and where, in order to look out, we must raise up steel periscopes, we still see the avenue with its green grass, the avenue so quiet in the waning light of evening; we no longer hear the barbarians, they no longer talk, or move, or breathe, and we keep only the unquiet sadness, I would almost say, the discouraged sadness of feeling them so near.

"But, to regain hope and joyous confidence, it is enough to retrace our steps along these underground corridors, where the evening meal of the soldiers is nearly over, in the lovely twilight. There, as soon as we are far enough from the enemy, so that our soldiers can chat freely and laugh freely, we are all at once bathed in holy gaiety, and in consoling, absolute certitude. There is the true reservoir of our irresistible power; there are steeped and steeped again all the wonderful mainsprings of our dashing attacks, of our final victory. What first strikes one, around these tables, is the admirable good understanding, the sort of affectionate familiarity, between the officers and the men. For a long time now, we have made a practice of this in the navy, where long exiles and dangers shared in our narrow shells bring us forcibly close to each other; but I believe that my comrades of the land army will bear no grudge against me, if I say that this familiarity, so compatible with discipline, is a shade newer for them than for us. It is one of the benefits reserved for them by the war of the trenches, that they are obliged to live closer to their soldiers, and to make themselves more loved by them. Already they know almost all their comrades with cloth stripes, call them by their names, chat with them like friends. Thus, when the solemn hours of assault come, when, instead of driving them on from behind with blows of whips, as happens among the savages on the other side, they go on ahead in the French fashion, they have small need to turn back to see if all are following them. They are well assured, besides, that if they fall, these humble companions will not fail to hurry up to them, at every risk, to defend them and carry them tenderly away.

"Therefore it is to this superhuman war, and especially to this life in common in the trenches, that we owe this union which makes us great, that we owe these mutual devotions so sublime that we feel drawn to kneel before them. Is it not also to this life in the trenches, and to these long and intimate conversations between officers and men, that

we owe to some degree these flashes of beauty which have come to penetrate all intellects, even the least open and the rudest? They know now, these soldiers of ours, to the last man among them, that our French has never been so worthy of admiration, and that her glory illumines them all; they know that a race whose hearts are thus awakened, is indestructible, and that neutral lands, even those that seem to have the heaviest scales upon their eyes, will end some day by seeing clearly, and by giving us the noble name of liberators.

"Oh! let us call down a benediction upon them, these trenches of ours, in which all social classes are mingled, in which friendships have been formed, that would have seemed impossible yesterday, where 'men of society' have learned that the soul of the peasant, the workman, the mechanic, may be as fine and noble as that of a very elegant gentleman, and even more interesting, because more original, more transparent, with less packing about it. Trenches, underground corridors, dark little labyrinths, little underground nooks of suffering and abnegation, in them will be held our best and purest school of social unity. But by this word, too often profaned, I mean, as may well be understood, the true social unity: that which is the synonym of tolerance and brotherhood, that, in a word, of which Christ came to give us the clear formula which, in its adorable simplicity, sums up all formulas: 'Love one another!'"

TWO LOYAL FRIENDS

IN the last few weeks The Theosophical Society has lost through death two of its most faithful, loyal and effective workers: Mrs. Archibald Keightley ("Jasper Niemand"), on Oct. 9th, and Miss Katherine Hillard, on Nov. 3d. Or, to speak more truly, since that which has genuine spiritual life can never be lost, these two splendid Theosophical workers have joined that large and increasing assemblage of our friends and brothers who, with the serene eyes of immortals, watch us and wait to welcome us in the quiet temple of everlasting day.

The Theosophical Society was founded in America, in New York. And here, in America, in New York, all its greatest trials have been faced, all its most signal and enduring victories have been won. In its stormy and momentous life, two of the earlier epochs are of especial significance; the first years of the initiation of our work, when Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, toiling with superb energy and devotion, helped by the love and understanding sympathy of W. Q. Judge, and reinforced by the then vigorous co-operation of Colonel H. S. Olcott, was laying the foundation for the whole future life of the Theosophical Society; then, after an interval of stillness, came the period opened by the magnificent work of W. Q. Judge, a loyal understanding of whose mission was destined to prove the touchstone of genuine Theosophical life in later years.

It is to the epoch of Mr. Judge's work that both Mrs. Keightley and Miss Hillard especially belonged; not that they ever ceased, or ever will cease their devoted labour; but that, by force of circumstances, their work at the beginning had a peculiar and incomparable value. The story has more than once been told, how Mr. Judge guarded the spark of spiritual fire committed to his charge, and, with the breath of his matchless devotion, fanned it into a flame that was to warm many hearts to spiritual life.

It is to these days when, after the first complete loneliness and isolation, Mr. Judge found friends and co-workers gradually gathering round him, that Miss Hillard and Mrs. Keightley belong, as to their most distinctive work. Miss Hillard, a very distinguished Dante scholar, had been working in her author's own Italy. Returning through London, she visited Mme. Blavatsky at 17 Lansdowne Road, not many months after Mme. Blavatsky's coming to England, in the spring of 1887. Then, on coming back to the United States, Miss Hillard volunteered for regular service with Mr. Judge. To-day, after years that have been almost silent in comparison with the loud notoriety of our earlier years, it is difficult for newcomers to realize what a difficult and serious sacrifice that kind of work then meant. It is not too much to say that, especially in the days

immediately following the attacks on Mme. Blavatsky, made first in India, and afterwards repeated in London, when so many of the former friends of that indomitable martyr to our Cause fell away from her, a cloud of obloquy rested on the Theosophical Society and on every one actively connected with it. They incurred the charge almost of lunacy; it was not "respectable" to be a Theosophist; it was especially perilous for anyone depending on intellectual work, and on the reputation that is needed for successful intellectual work. This was Miss Hillard's position. As a successful writer, she had won a reputation for careful research, for sound judgment, for trustworthy craftsmanship. Also, and this was, in a way, even more delicate ground, she had a singularly warm and close and highly valued circle of relationships and family ties. All this, reputation and intimacies, she knowingly and most willingly risked —and to some degree lost—by her determination to work openly and methodically with Mr. Judge, a resolution which she courageously carried out, reading valuable papers before the Aryan Theosophical Society, of which Mr. Judge was President; and contributing to his magazine *The Path,* articles generally signed in full; sometimes initialed only. Work of this kind gradually developed, and, with changing needs, took changing forms; but, so long as she was able, under the burden of gathering years, Miss Hillard continued to work. And, when external work became impossible for her, she gave of the treasurers of her heart.

To the same period, the most distinctive part of Mrs. Keightley's work also belongs; most distinctive for the same reason: because in those days loyal and effective workers were so few. Coming of a family distinguished on both sides by gifts of a high order, herself very successful as an essayist, dramatist, and translater of verse; the brilliant centre of a very brilliant social life, Mrs. Keightley practically gave up all these valuable privileges and prizes and devoted herself wholly to the work which Mr. Judge then had in hand, and especially to *The Path.* Under the pen-name of Jasper Niemand, and in response to the instruction she had received from Mr. Judge—much of which was published later in the form of *Letters that have Helped me*—Mrs. Keightley wrote a series of wonderful articles, of which it may fairly be said that, for the first time in the history of the Theosophical Society, they sounded some of the depths of the inner, spiritual life. For many, her articles were the first impulse in the present life awaking dormant intuitions of the soul's august mysteries.

But Mrs. Keightley's work was greatly varied. She wrote in *The Path* not under one pen-name, but under many, editing departments, completing articles, and, what was less known but equally vital, giving invaluable help in proof-reading and the technical part of getting out the little magazine, a task for which her own wide literary experience well fitted her. From the collaboration of these early days came a magazine which, for inspiration, for immediate response to the thought of the celestials, has not been surpassed in the history of our movement.

As Mr. Judge's work and his personal mission became more clear, Mrs. Keightley became more and more closely identified with that work and mission. By her life, she kept up the living tradition of the miraculous soul; by her knowledge and understanding of Mr. Judge, she imparted understanding and sympathy to others; and, in the critical days when the Theosophical Society was on trial, both in this country and in England her wise influence steadied many who otherwise might have gone astray. Of this side of her work it is more difficult to speak; but there are many who know and understand how effective that work has been—a work only suspended by her death a few weeks ago.

So, while we lose two of our most valued and beloved workers, we add to our honorable roll of those who have died fighting in our ranks; who have been faithful unto death.

FACES OF FRIENDS*

Among the "Friends" whose faces *The Path* has been presenting to its readers few, if any, have a greater claim to a prominent place than "Jasper Niemand." To most an unknown but dear friend, dear because of the heart-touching help and light which for many has come from the writings bearing this signature—a *nom-de-plume* as all must have known. The personality thus veiled hitherto is that of one personality very dear to many an earnest worker in the T. S.: that of Mrs. Archibald Keightley, more widely known perhaps in the ranks of the T. S. under the name of Mrs. J. Campbell VerPlanck.

Her maiden name in full was Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell, daughter of the Hon. James H. Campbell, a prominent Pennsylvania lawyer. Her father's was a highly distinguished career. He commanded his regiment during the war; served as a member of the U. S. Congress for several terms; held two diplomatic commissions under President Lincoln as U. S. Minister to Sweden and Norway, and subsequently to Bogota in South America. Her mother was Juliet Lewis, daughter of Chief Justice Ellis Lewis of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, a writer of verse possessing great poetical charm and value.

Mrs. Keightley's childhood was chiefly passed among the Pennsylvania mountains, and later on the continent of Europe, where she was educated and entered the society of foreign courts at the early age of sixteen. Even then she had already developed the literary talent for which the members of both branches of her family had been noted, and had displayed for generations in the occupations of their leisure hours. Her early writings consisted of transactions from the poems of the present and late Kings of Sweden, in original verse, tales and descriptions published in *Harper's Magazine,* the *Galaxy,* and other periodicals,

* Reprinted from *The Path,* Vol. IX, No. 1.

under her own name as well as the *nom-de-plume* of "Esperance." That the work itself was of fine quality is shown by the fact that full market rates were always gladly paid for it; while the deeper tendencies in the writer's nature are seen in the fact that the spur of exertion lay in the desire to give for the helping of others somewhat she had herself *earned,* and not merely the superfluity of that wealth which the accident of birth—or Karma?—had placed at her command. The child is truly the father of the man—or woman; and how happy must she have been when feeling so early that she could already, by her own efforts, do something to lessen the misery of others?

Miss Julia W. L. Campbell (as she then was) married in 1871 Mr. Philip W. VerPlanck of New York; and six years later, in the course of a single year, she lost her husband and both sons suddenly by a most dramatic series of reverses—including dangers and losses of many kinds Long and terrible illness followed these sudden blows.

During her recovery Mrs. VerPlanck wrote her two successful plays, "The Puritan Maid" and "Sealed Instructions," the latter having had a marked success during two seasons at the Madison Square Theatre, New York, as well as throughout the country.

To turn from the outer to the inner life. By long established family custom, Mrs. VerPlanck belonged to the Episcopal Church—"The Church of England"—but she found no spiritual life there. Indeed, she had ceased to seek for any such life, content apparently with the ideals of literature and art, in a happy domestic and social circle where leisure and refined conditions permitted the cultivation of personal gifts. Yet an interior want now and then made itself felt.

One day, however, quite by chance as it were, when lunching with her close friend, Mrs. Anna Lynch Botta, the name of Madame Blavatsky was mentioned, and mentioned as that of an exposed fraud. From thence to Theosophy was but a step; Mrs. VerPlanck had never heard of either, and Mrs. Botta, whose circle comprised almost every distinguished member of society at home and abroad (that well-known circle unique in American life), invited her friend to accompany her to hear Mrs. Arthur Gebhard speak on Theosophy to Mrs. Ole Bull, Mrs. Celia Thaxter, and others in the drawing room of a friend. The impression made upon Mrs. VerPlanck was so deep that she joined the T. S. within two weeks, and thenceforward began her unceasing work for Theosophy.

Living with her parents at a distance from New York she wrote for *The Path* under the names of "Julius," "August Waldensee," "J," and later on as "Jasper Niemand," as well as unsigned articles, and also corresponded with T. S. enquirers. In those days writers were so few in the Society that they had to take several names, and often one would write up the notes or finish the articles of another.

In answer to some enquirers as to the "Jasper Niemand" writings, Mrs. Keightley writes: "When I began to write articles along these

lines, H. P. B. sent me a pen which I always used. The articles were and are always written in full objective consciousness, but at these times there is a feeling of inspiration, of greater mental freedom. The *Letters that have helped me* were received at my Pennsylvania home. They were written for me and for Dr. Keightley—and for the use of others later on—by Mr. W. Q. Judge, at the express wish of H. P. Blavatsky. The letter which is the source of this request, and which conveys assurance of Mr. Judge's qualifications for the office of instructor, purported to be written *through* Madame Blavatsky (it begins 'Says Master'), and is one of those so ably described by Col. H. S. Olcott in the *Theosophist* for July, 1893, where he says that communications from high occult sources received through H. P. B. always resembled her handwriting."

This modification of H. P. B.'s handwriting is decidedly interesting in the above-mentioned letter, whose data amply justify the manner in which "Z" is spoken of in Niemand's preface. Moreover, H. P. B. spoke of her friend Mr. Judge as the "exile," and Annie Besant wrote later on, "You are indeed fortunate in having W. Q. J. as Chief. Now that H. P. B. has gone, it is the Americans who have as immediate leader the greatest of the exiles." (The technical meaning of these titles, "Greatest of the Exiles" and "Friend of all Creatures," as employed in the East, is totally unknown in the West; the latter being a phrase that has more than once been applied, half in jest, to W. Q. J. by his intimates on account of his often enforced dectrine of "accepting all men and all things"—providing they *work* for Theosophy.—B. K.)

It is to be hoped that the Editor of *The Path,* a journal so indissolubly connected with the Theosophical writings of the subject of this sketch, will not from personal hesitation exclude from its pages information which is really a moderate statement on behalf of "Jasper Niemand" in reply to questions coming from all parts of the world. The statement would have been made earlier, were it not for a wish, on Jasper Niemand's part, to continue helpful private correspondence carried on with many persons who addressed under the protection of her impersonality.

After the departure of H. P. B., Mrs. VerPlanck now and again joined the New York staff of workers as a reinforcement during Mr. Judge's prolonged absences.

Mrs. VerPlanck continued to live with her parents in Pennsylvania until the autumn of 1891, when she married Dr. Archibald Keightley of Old Hall, Westmoreland. After a year's residence in New York they were called to England by the ill-health of Dr. Keightley's mother.

And here this sketch ends for the present. It is not for me to say more, nor to dwell upon the respect and affection which its subject has gained in her new sphere of duty. But I know that I voice the earnest wish of all in expressing the hope that many years of equally fruitful and valuable work for our beloved Cause still lie before her.

FRAGMENTS

SORROW and pain come to all in this world, which is a place of discipline, not of rest. Accept your position bravely and patiently; out of this will grow peace. Have a more living faith in the inner meaning and purpose of your life, and live unfalteringly in accordance with that faith. You must not tangle the inner and the outer. You know what trouble and real grief you have whenever this occurs.

These are heavy times . . . never mind. The end is not yet, but will be; and we must go on, through the darkness as through the light, immovable, serene. Live *inside:* there is your place, there, where the outer turmoil comes not, nor blindness, nor obscuration. Aspiration and effort bring you there, and an *insistance* of faith makes it living instead of dead. Hold yourself still, in meditation; dwell constantly on the inner life, not the outer; and see in all about you symbols merely, pointing the way of reality and truth.

Your lighted torch must be kept unflickering: no easy task this in the turmoil of these days. But *try* it: if you try hard enough you can do it. Do not be deceived by any outer thing. Your heart is your guide and monitor,—there where I reside;—listen to it. At the darkest hour it will whisper, "All is well," and you will find quiet and strength where you thought a battle raging. Do not be discouraged. Never despair. The hour of fierce conflict must show your mettle, prove the force and purity of your inner life. . . .

Patience and silence. Shut no one out of your heart. Emotion and sentiment pass away, principles remain; and impersonality will enable you to judge others with a wider charity, because it gives the necessary perspective. Never allow yourself to be carried away by any feeling either for or against. Hold the scales evenly in your hands, and weigh your own heart and your own judgment as impartially as you do another's. So striving you will grow toward the true justice, practically unknown in this world of blind passion and ignorance; often least understood by those who think they understand the most, and who sometimes should.

The old Jewish commandment, "Thou shalt have none other Gods but me," is applicable to every department of life, if one considers the *me* to be Krishna, the Higher Self. You are learning lessons of profound value out of these things; what more do you want? Life is for training, not for diversion and distraction. Accept it so and half your questions are answered.

CAVÉ.

EMILE VERHAEREN

A NEW literary epoch began in France with the publication in 1904 of *Jean-Christophe*. One characteristic of the new epoch is its religion—it is intensely Christian. The Christianity of the new period is not of a secular type—the minimum effort required to keep one on the right side of the fence; it is Christianity as practised by the saints—the maximum that loving fervour and devotion can inspire. A result of the fervent practice of religion is intimacy. The spiritual world, the Angels, the Master Himself—these become vivid, real, close; they are no longer vague and distant abstractions, intangibilities. They are warm and human. They respond to appeals from men—even talk with men. One will recall Christophe's impassioned conversation with Christ, recorded toward the end of *Le Buisson Ardent*. No small part of Péguy's three volumes of Mystères is taken up with the conversation of God Himself—conversation of a very human kind—humorous, ironical, gay. It is Paul Claudel who definitely points out the contrast between the new epoch and what preceded it. In his *Cinq Grandes Odes* Claudel writes:

Soyez béni, mon Dieu, qui m'avez délivré des idoles,
Et qui faites que je n'adore que Vous seul et non point Isis et Osiris,
Ou la Justice, ou le Progrès, ou la Vérité, ou la Divinité, ou l'Humanité, ou les Lois de la Nature, ou l'Art, ou la Beauté.
Seigneur, Vous m'avez delivré des livres et des Idées, des Idoles et de leur prêtres.
Seigneur, je Vous ai trouvé.
Je crois sans y changer un seul point ce que mes pères ont cru avant moi,
Confessant le Sauveur des hommes et Jésus qui est mort sur la croix.

Claudel does not leave in any doubt what he means by the religion of his fathers: Deliver France, he exclaims, from "les Voltaire, les Renan, les Michelet, les Hugo, et tous les autres infâmes." The religion of Claudel, Rolland, Péguy and others is not some attenuated or allegorised Christianity; it is the faith of the ages, of the Fathers and Martyrs, of St. Geneviève and Jeanne d'Arc.

The change from levity and mockery to ardent faith is so great and so recent as to amaze us. It is the more difficult to accept as credible on account of its suddenness. It seems to have come in the night, without being prepared for. We had grown used to *les Renan*. Whatever soul France might have, we had thought, must surely be a compound of scepticism and dilettantism. True there are points and individuals that since the death of Renan and Verlaine (1892 and 1897) stand out in protest against the degradation of French ideals, in life as in literature.

Bourget is one, Brunetière another. We can see the sympathy between their efforts and those of *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine*. But the two distinguished men of letters seem detached individuals—quite insufficient to bridge the distance between the France of 1890 and the France of today. To find the true work of preparation, the effort that has made possible the miracle of a revival of faith in France we must turn outside her own boundaries to Belgium. Emile Verhaeren, Belgian, is the transition from the old to the new in France. Since 1870 he has done for French literature a service like that his country did for France in 1914. Belgium threw herself into a gap, checked destructive forces, gave France opportunity for getting herself together, and thus saved France from disintegration. Verhaeren, a man of Titanic force, threw himself into the chasm of disintegrating individualism in literature—"l'etrange vanité d'être seul à s'admirer ou à se comprendre lui-même." He was a magnetic nucleus around which younger men clustered. But Verhaeren did not advance into the Promised Land of faith in which Claudel and Péguy found themselves at home. He is in strict sense a poet of an age of transition. He wanders between two worlds. His service to France was like Belgium's. And he shares the fate of his country today, though on a more acute plane. In the spiritual sense, he is homeless and foodless.

His first volume was published in 1883—*Les Flamands*—ten years after Verlaine's *Paysages Belges*. Verlaine, a French dilettante, saw Belgium of the debâcle as *motifs* for aquarelles in *rose et verdâtre* with sufficient *brume* to make studied contrasts:

> Il pleure dans mon cœur
> Comme il pleut dans la ville.

Verhaeren, a robust compatriot of Rubens, saw Belgium through Flemish eyes. His verse in the first volume is like Flemish painting—huge bulwarks of ruddy flesh with arteries and veins so full that the purple blood almost spurts through the skin. Excess, a tendency to be gross, is characteristic of many artists of the first rank,—Tintoretto, for example, or Michelangelo; it is not a fault found in minor artists. Great artists get it under control and it becomes magnificence, grandeur. Verhaeren was long in dominating his tendency to excess, and worked it off partly on the physical plane. For several years he gave himself up to debauchery that brought him to the very border line of madness. Born in 1855 of an orthodox Catholic family, he was destined for the priesthood. But after completing his academic training at Louvain, he prepared for law examinations at Brussels, and threw overboard the moral and religious principles that won his admiration as an adolescent. There followed a period of riotous excess that brought with it physical disease, melancholia and mental disintegration. Through this period of disease and decay he continued an artist, studying his own moods and sensations, and recording them with apt symbols. The titles of the volumes written at this time of dissipation and disease are indicative of their

contents—*Les Soirs, La Débâcle, Les Flambeaux Noirs.* His imagery is that of Dante's *Inferno,* blackness, smoke, fog, mud, ice. The world is hung around as with a dark curtain, and its gloom is intensified by the black torches which flame against it. Warmth, life and sunlight have disappeared from the earth. Everything is locked in an eternal winter.

La neige tombe, indiscontinûment,
Comme une lente et longue et pauvre laine,
Parmi la morne et longue et pauvre plaine,
Froide d'amour, chaude de haine.

Ainsi tombe la neige au loin,
En chaque sente, en chaque coin,
Tonjours la neige et son suaire,
La neige pâle et mortuaire,
La neige pâle et inféconde,
En folles loques vagabondes
Par à travers l'hiver illimité du monde*

Of actual landscapes, he finds the dreary desolateness of an English winter most consonant with his mood, and he speaks of "ce Londres qui est mon âme.

Et ces marches et ces gestes de femmes soûles;
Et ces alcools de lettres d'or jusques aux toits;
Et tout à coup la mort, parmi ces foules;
O mon âme du soir, ce Londres noir qui traîne en toi!

These volumes describe conditions that are morbid and that often seem insane. Yet, they will hold a place among similar morbid verse by reason of the artistic form in which Verhaeren has expressed his gloomy musings.

Verhaeren watched his approach to madness, and wrung a forlorn comfort from his despair in the thought that complete madness would put an end to the painful alternations of sanity. He was saved, however, from the débâcle he contemplated. The secret prayer of his soul for deliverance was heard—perhaps something in his early religious training had penetrated below the layer of his mind. He was "converted." From the fog and soot of his spiritual London he was led into air and sunshine by St. George. The splendid, ringing, martial poem which describes that conversion, remains after many years and many volumes, his best.

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* Cf. also the poem "La Pluie":

La pluie,
La longue pluie, avec ses longs fils gris,
Avec ses cheveux d'eau, avec ses rides,
La longue pluie
Des vieux pays,
Eternelle et torpide!

Ouverte en large éclair, parmi les brumes,
Une avenue;
Et Saint Georges, cuirassé d'or,
Avec des plumes et des écumes,
Au poitrail blanc de son cheval, sans mors,
Descend.
Il m'a rempli de son essor
Et tendrement d'un effroi doux;
Devant sa vision altière,
J'ai mis, en sa pâle main fière,
Les fleurs tristes de ma douleur;
Et lui, s'en est allé, m'imposant la vaillance
Et sur le front, la marque en croix d'or de sa lance,
Droit vers son Dieu, avec mon cœur.

Verhaeren's conversion removed scales from his eyes and he looked out upon a new world filled with beauty. It is at this point that the tangent of futurism shoots off from his work, though he is no more responsible for that heresy in art than are many others who, through conversion, have been awaked to a beauty that radiates through the world. Self-indulgence had clouded his retina, until he could see in the universe only the projection of his own foul and morbid moods. Conversion changed his polarity from self and enabled him to see the world as it really is. In his reaction from his state of black despair it was natural that he should go to an extreme of joy. The man who with jaundiced eye can see nothing in snowflakes but a relentless storm of soot, may, in his ecstasy over recovery, so spread his own rosy happiness over the face of things as to take a cloud of soot for drifting snow. The changed appearance that conversion brought into the face of nature for Verhaeren is not an isolated phenomenon. Something of that kind happens whenever a man is converted from the self-indulgence of sin to positive efforts at right living. Traherne and Jonathan Edwards are cases parallel with Verhaeren's. Traherne relates what Eden-like splendour shone from trees and grass and stones at the beginning of his life.[1] There followed an eclipse of that celestial light, and all

[1] "All appeared new, and strange at first, inexpressibly rare and delightful and beautiful. I was a little stranger, which at my entrance into the world was saluted and surrounded with innumerable joys. My knowledge was Divine. . . . The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold: the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me, their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things. The Men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem! Immortal Cherubims! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die; but all things abided as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day, and something infinite behind everything appeared; which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The city seemed to stand in Eden, or to be built in Heaven. The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the world was mine."

became dark. Then came his conversion which restored earth to more than her pristine splendour.[2]

Edwards' experience shows a close parallel. His inward change wrought so powerfully on outward nature that violent thunderstorms became his delight. They had formerly terrified. Verhaeren's experience is as normal as these others. He had been restored by St. George from death to life. He is in ecstasy over life. The very ills that modify life's exuberant course can delight him inasmuch as they testify to the presence of life. One can quite easily understand such enthusiasm. A boy's face swollen out with mumps is scarcely an artistic subject; but compared with a corpse the boy is to be congratulated—mumps could not exist in death, it is an incident common in the course of life, and because thus associated with life it acquires by transfer some of the worth of life itself. It is thus that Verhaeren rejoices over all the incidents and accidents of life—trivial or vulgar. Even the casualties of somnambulism would come in for admiration and honour. Can we not see that an unfortunate lady* precipitated down a staircase would receive on every step convincing evidence of the vitality of her nerve centers? Let us remember that every man of force collects around him like a magnet a crowd of followers. The followers often catch only a superficial mannerism. Verhaeren must not be held responsible for the vagaries of the futurist school.

Warmth of color and backgrounds of gold (over and over he uses *gold* in the plural, *les ors,* gold in many shades banked up like sunset vapours) replace the rain and ice of his Inferno. In *Les Flamands,* he paints as Rubens and Teniers. In verse like the *St. Georges,* his color is Memling's or Van Eycks'. But there is a fervour, a rush of aspiration that is not Memling's or Van Eycks', that one finds in the great Italians, in Titian's Assumption, and in Tintoretto.

Verhaeren's production is not uniform. The morbid verse of personal despair came to an end. But along with the most exquisite and winged poems such as are found in *Les Heures Claires,* there occur volumes that are raucous, brutal and mad. A reader is puzzled by the violent and repulsive contrast. Verhaeren's dual production will be understood if certain facts that occur outside the usual sphere of literature be considered with attention. Those who have been privileged to gain experience in rescue mission work such as that described by Mr. Harold Begbie in *Twice Born Men* know that the conversion of drunk-

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[2] "He thought within himself that this world was far better than Paradise had men eyes to see its glory, and their advantages. For the very miseries and sins and offences that are in it are the materials of his joy and triumph and glory. So that he is to learn a diviner art that will now be happy and that is like a royal chemist to reign among poisons, to turn scorpions into fishes, weeds into flowers, bruises into ornaments, poisons into cordials. And he that cannot learn this art, of extracting good out of evil, is to be accounted nothing. Heretofore, to enjoy beauties, and be grateful for benefits was all the art that was required to felicity, but now a man must, like a God, bring Light out of Darkness, and order out of confusion. Which we are taught to do by His wisdom, that ruleth in the midst of storm and tempests."

* "Portrait d'une Nue descendant un escalier."

ards and other vicious men is a thing of degrees. A few men, cured of their foolish self-will by the "hard luck" that follows prolonged self-indulgence, will finally make a surrender of themselves, and in humility lead a new life. Their conversion though progressive is thorough going. Others, though making only a partial surrender of self-will, will nevertheless get rid of alcoholic intemperance. The new freedom brings exhaltation. In time they come to look upon this freedom as accomplished by their own will-power rather than by Divine Grace, and their heads become full of conceited notions. The last state of such men is often worse than their first. True they may not return to hard drink. Their self-indulgence nevertheless takes a less obvious outlet. They have not emptied themselves of the selfishness which manifested itself as ruinous alcoholism; they have merely stopped up the lowest hole in the hogshead. The contents, all undrained, will now leak out through some hole higher up on the side. Self-indulgence has not been ended—it has taken a subtle and more dangerous form. Such "converts" often become tyrants in their families or Bible class. If we may compare the higher grades of life with the lowest, Verhaeren's experience would seem more like that of the false convert than of the true. He was delivered by St. George from common madness—madness on the physiological plane. But he did not yield himself wholly to the divine influence of St. George. The interior spiritual disorder which was manifesting itself on the physical plane as insanity, was checked only in its place of manifestation, and came to expression again in Verhaeren, subtly, as philosophical madness.

The metaphysical madness that pervades much of Verhaeren's writing is the familiar system of Nietsche; we need delay for no comment upon it. It is the detestable idea of brute force as righteousness—a disregard of morality, honour and the restraints that decency and civilization impose upon selfishness.

So many critics have spoken of Verhaeren as a Belgian Walt Whitman that the resemblance ought to be made clear or disproved. In truth there is no essential likeness between the two poets, though a hasty reader might be misled by a superficial trait. After all prejudices and repugnancies are overcome, and all subtractions made for grossness and uncouthness, the real Whitman remains a prophet of spiritual living. His great and characteristic strain is a call to spiritual warfare.

As I ponder'd in silence,
Returning upon my poems, considering, lingering long,
A Phantom arose before me with distrustful aspect,
Terrible in beauty, age, and power,
The genius of poets of old lands,
As to me directing like flame its eyes,
With finger pointing to many immortal songs,
And menacing voice, What singest thou? it said,

Know'st thou not there is but one theme for ever-enduring bards?
And that is the theme of War, the fortune of battles,
The making of perfect soldiers.
Be it so, then I answer'd.
I too haughty Shade also sing war, and a longer and greater one than any,
Waged in my book with varying fortune, with flight, advance and retreat,
victory deferr'd and wavering,
(Yet methinks certain, or as good as certain, at the last,) the field the world,
For life and death, for the Body and for the eternal Soul,
Lo, I too am come, chanting the chant of battles,
I above all promote brave soldiers.

It is not slander or disparagement to say that Whitman did not maintain the high level of that poem—it is in the nature of a poet to be unequal. There are strata of poetic consciousness that, for all their impalpability, are similar to the solid layers of geology. The individual poet rises and falls through those strata as mercury does in a thermometric tube. The highest strata are the domain of those unutterably sweet melodies of which Keats dreamed

> Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
> Are sweeter.

It is a realm where harmony of sound and line and color become harmonies of act, real existences in the spiritual plane, that filter down through denser strata as musical and poetic magic. Whitman rose to that high stratum, and caught his vision of a supramundane world in which the distractions and discords of earth are resolved into harmonies. He saw brotherhood as the law of the "communion of the saints"—a brotherhood of the heart, not a brotherhood distorted by the intellect into socialism and democracy. But as Whitman's mercuric consciousness dropped from that lofty plane to the lower levels of his personal life, his mind began to interpret what it remembered of his soul's experience in terms of its own personal limitations. That mental interpretation is necessarily a distortion and a limitation of the original truth perceived. In Whitman's case, the joy he felt over conditions in the spiritual realm became crude, gross and blatant satisfaction with material progress. It is on this downward point that Whitman and Verhaeren for a moment touch. When the first fervours of his conversion had cooled, Verhaeren's delight in all that his eye could see became easily gross acceptance of unideal conditions—a blatant content with material evolution.

Whitman, however, was something of an inspiration to Péguy, who in spiritual wisdom far outdistances his older friend, the Belgian poet. Yet it would not be correct to give the impression that Whitman is responsible for the new and virile note in French poetry—that inspiration is a thing passing thus from man to man. To believe the latter

statement would be an assumption that the universe is a man-managed place instead of a creation divinely guided. I am tempted to go outside the field of literature in order to look for evidence of the divine guidance which endeavours constantly to lead men to better things. In my search I turn to the religious orders, and from many contemporary records, I select the autobiography of a Carmelite nun, Soeur Thérèse of Lisieux, whose brief life covers the period from 1873-1897. The autobiography was written in obedience to a direction from the Superior of the convent who wished a record of Soeur Thérèse's progress for the benefit of other nuns in the Order. What Thérèse writes herself, as well as what is written and narrated of her by other nuns, is marked by the qualities that characterise Péguy's verse—gayety, humour, and a human intimacy with divine things and beings. Here is the narrative of a nun who explains the circumstances that brought her a wonderful and charming letter from Thérèse. May we not think that the letter was truly inspired by the Divine Master whose name Thérèse signed to it?

"Being somewhat of a child in my ways, the Holy Child—to help me in the practice of virtue—inspired me with the thought of amusing myself with Him, and I chose the game of ninepins. I imagined them of all sizes and colours, representing the souls I wished to reach. The ball was—*love*.

"In December, 1896, the novices received, for the benefit of the Foreign Missions, various trifles towards a Christmas tree, and at the bottom of the box containing them was a *top*—a rare thing in a Carmelite convent. My companions remarked: 'What an ugly thing!—of what use will it be?' But I, who knew the game, caught hold of it, exclaiming: 'Nay, what fun! it will spin a whole day without stopping if it be well whipped'; and thereupon I spun it round to their great surprise.

"Soeur Thérèse was quietly watching us, and on Christmas night, after midnight Mass, I found in our cell the famous top, with a delightful letter addressed as follows:

To My Beloved Little Spouse

Player of Ninepins on the Mountain of Carmel

Christmas night, 1896.

"My Beloved Little Spouse—I am well pleased with thee! All the year round thou hast amused Me by playing at *ninepins*. I was so overjoyed that the whole court of Angels was surprised and charmed. Several little cherubs have asked Me why I did not make them children. Others wanted to know if the melody of their instruments were not more pleasing to Me than thy joyous laugh when a ninepin fell at the stroke of thy love-ball. My answer to them was, that they must not regret they are not children, since one day they would play with thee in the meadows of Heaven. I told them also that thy smiles were cer-

tainly more sweet to Me than their harmonies, because these smiles were purchased by suffering and forgetfulness of self.

"And now, my cherished Spouse, it is my turn to ask something of thee. Thou wilt not refuse Me—thou lovest Me too much. Let us change the game. Ninepins amuse me greatly, but at present I should like to play at spinning a top, and, if thou dost consent, thou shalt be the top. I give thee one as a model. Thou seest that it is ugly to look at, and would be kicked aside by whosoever did not know the game. But at the sight of it a child would leap for joy and shout: 'What fun! it will spin a whole day without stopping'!

"Although thou too art not attractive, I—the little Jesus—love thee, and beg of thee to keep always spinning to amuse Me. True, it needs a whip to make a top spin. Then let thy sisters supply the whip, and be thou most grateful to those who shall make thee turn fastest. When I shall have had plenty of fun, I will bring thee to join Me here, and our games shall be full of unalloyed delight. Thy little Brother,

JESUS."

A second testimony from another nun shows no less good sense and good-humour.

"I had the habit of constantly crying about the merest trifles, and this was a source of great pain to Soeur Thérèse. One day a bright idea occurred to her: taking a mussel-shell from her painting table, and, holding my hands lest I should prevent her, she gathered my tears in the shell, and soon they were turned into merry laughter.

" 'There', she said, 'from this onwards I permit you to cry as much as you like on condition that it is into the shell!'

"A week, however, before her death, I spent a whole evening in tears at the thought of her fast-approaching end. She knew it, and said: 'You have been crying. Was it into the shell?' I was unable to tell an untruth, and my answer grieved her. 'I am going to die,' she continued, 'and I shall not be at rest about you unless you promise to follow faithfully my advice. I consider it of the utmost importance for the good of your soul.'

"I promised what she asked, begging leave, however, as a favour, to be allowed to cry at her death. 'But,' she answered, 'why cry at my death? Those tears will certainly be useless. You will be bewailing my happiness! Still I have pity on your weakness, and for the first few days you have leave to cry, though afterwards you must again take up the shell.'

"It has cost me some heroic efforts, but I have been faithful. I have kept the shell at hand, and each time the wish to cry overcame me, I laid hold of the pitiless thing. However urgent the tears, the trouble of passing it from one eye to the other so distracted my thoughts, that before very long this ingenious method entirely cured me of my sensibility."

In view of such a life as that of Soeur Thérèse, may we not think of Divine Powers working above and behind the visible scheme of things and imparting their wisdom and force to those who can pass it on to others? Whitman in America would seem to be one of many transmitters. Those Divine Powers seem to have touched responsive hearts in France also, and to have revealed much of themselves through Péguy and Soeur Thérèse. They touched Verhaeren's heart too, and aroused him sufficiently to make of him a great poet, though he is not their faithful servitor. At a period in French literary life when scepticism and dilettantism held the reins, Verhaeren's genuine religious experience, and his immense vitality, served as example and encouragement for a younger set of writers who were to dethrone usurping Disbelief. Verhaeren's philosophical verse—poems that deal with material evolution are of slight value. His lyrics—even those of morbid moods, but above all the love poems—will rank him high. In *Les Heures Claires,* he has written to his wife verse that takes one back to Michelangelo's for Vittoria Colonna. It is love poetry equal to Rossetti's at Rossetti's best, without the fleshly suggestion that sometimes taints the sonnets of *The House of Life.* It is by *Les Heures Claires* and *Les Heures d'après Midi* that Verhaeren will win many ardent admirers.

Chaque heure, où je songe à ta bonté
Si simplement profonde,
Je me confonds en prières vers toi.

Je suis venu si tard
Vers la douceur de ton regard,
Et de si loin vers tes deux mains tendues,
Tranquillement, par à travers les étendues!

J'avais en moi tant de rouille tenace
Qui me rongeait, à dents rapaces,
La confiance.

J'étais si lourd, j'étais si las,
J'étais si vieux de méfiance,
J'ètais si lourd, j'étais si las
Du vain chemin de tous mes pas.

Je méritais si peu la merveilleuse joie
De voir tes pieds illuminer ma voie,
Que j'en reste tremblant encore et presque en pleurs
Et humble, à tout jamais, en face du bonheur.

Clarence C. Clark.

AN UNATTRACTIVE HEAVEN*

I DOUBT whether many readers of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY are looking for proof of the immortality of the soul. To those who are doing so the literature of spiritualism must prove the more disappointing the more thoughtfully it is examined. The most recent addition to this literature that has come under our notice—*Letters from a Living Dead Man,* written down by Elsa Barker—is no exception to the general rule, for between evidence and proof there is a world of difference.

Indeed I do not know how one ever could *prove* the survival of consciousness, for I do not know how its present existence may be proved. My own consciousness is certainly more fundamental to me than any proof could be; and, having to be taken for granted in all proofs, becomes a premise which cannot be made a conclusion. I am certain of it not by proof, but by experience. And as I cannot prove it to myself, I must suppose I should have great difficulty in proving it to anybody else. If they chose to regard my words as the productions of their own minds, my appearance as an optical illusion, my movement of their arms and bodies, if I were to shake them in my exasperation, as a new kind of St. Vitus's dance, what on earth could I do about it? I have never really been confronted with this problem, as my friends and acquaintances have so far been good enough to indulge the assumptions of my existence and consciousness. But I am appalled at the contemplation of its difficulties should they ever see fit to change their minds about me. Again and again I have had to retire, baffled and beaten, before their mere challenge that I should prove my reasonableness; and to prove oneself reasonable is simple child's play to proving oneself existent and conscious. This may seem like a contradiction, for one instinctively feels that one could not be reasonable without being conscious. But when you look back over the course of many lengthy, hard fought arguments, you are compelled to observe with what facility your own reasonableness—once proved—is claimed as the reasonableness of your opponent. You either have not proved your reasonableness, or else you have convinced him that it is his own just as much as yours. So if he should persist in his prejudice against your existence, this presentation of reasonableness—and all the labour you expended upon it—must go for nothing. It is his own reasonableness, and you may continue a myth for all of it.

I am prepared to make a free gift of this argument to our spiritualistic friends, to help them to fill their long felt need of some excuse for the general trivial imbecility of the mediumistic communications which they consider they receive from the spirit world. No one of us is as

* *Letters from a Living Dead Man,* written down by Elsa Barker, Mitchell Kennerley, New York, 1915.

prone to claim imbecility as wisdom, and what we disclaim for ourselves runs a fair chance of being attributed to some one else—and so of convincing us of some one else's existence. I do not regard this as a very good argument. But the advantage of any argument, as Bertrand Russell says of a proof, is that "it instils a modicum of doubt as to the validity of the result," and it is highly desirable that the immortality of the type of consciousness, reflected in the ordinary spiritualistic seance, should be doubted as energetically as possible. Were these doubts to fail us, existence would be indeed a horror.

These *Letters from a Living Dead Man* cannot, however, be ranked with the usual productions of spiritualistic experimentation. They are as far removed as possible from imbecility. On the contrary, they are marked throughout with an excess of mentality that is almost equally repellant. They furnish no *proof* of the continued existence of individual consciousness beyond the death of the body; but they do take their place in that great mass of evidence, trivial and weighty, trustworthy and untrustworthy, attractive and repulsive, which points to this conclusion, and which in its totality is overwhelmingly convincing.

On the paper wrapper of Mrs. Barker's volume is the facsimile of a letter written by her to the publisher, Mr. Kennerley, giving him her personal assurance "unqualified by any reservations whatever, that the experiences recorded in this book occurred precisely as I have explained in the Introduction." Indeed the inherent evidence of the "Letters" themselves bears out what is said of the way in which they were written, and perhaps we cannot do better than to give this in Mrs. Barker's own words.

"One night last year in Paris I was strongly impelled to take up a pencil and write, though what I was to write about I had no idea. Yielding to the impulse, my hand was seized as if from the outside, and a remarkable message of a personal nature came, followed by the signature 'X.'

"The purport of the message was clear, but the signature puzzled me.

"The following day I showed this writing to a friend, asking her if she had any idea who 'X' was.

"'Why,' she replied, 'don't you know that that is what we always call Mr. ——?'

"I did not know.

"Now, Mr. —— was six thousand miles from Paris, and, as we supposed, in the land of the living. But a day or two later a letter came to me from America, stating that Mr. —— had died in the western part of the United States, a few days before I received in Paris the automatic message signed 'X.'

"So far as I know, I was the first person in Europe to be informed of his death, and I immediately called on my friend to tell her that 'X' had passed out. She did not seem surprised, and told me that she had felt certain of it some days before when I had shown her the 'X' letter, though she had not said so at the time.

"Naturally I was impressed by this extraordinary incident.

"'X' was not a spiritualist. I am not myself, and never have been a spiritualist, and, so far as I can remember, only two other supposedly disembodied entities had ever before written automatically through my hand. This had happened when I was in the presence of a mediumistic person; but the messages were brief and I had not attached any great importance to the phenomena."

Certain earlier incidents are then given which show that Mrs. Barker had long been subject to psychic or "hypnagogic" visions and had dabbled more or less with mediumistic and psychic phenomena. "But to the whole subject of communication between the two worlds I had felt an ususual degree of indifference. Spiritualism had always left me cold, and I had not even read the standard works on the subject."

It was to please her friend that she consented to let "X" write again —"if he could." A letter came through her hand with the usual "breaks and pauses between the sentences, with large and badly formed letters, but quite automatically, as in the first instance."

From that time on, the letters continued to come: "sometimes several times a week; again nearly a month would elapse without my feeling his presence. I never called him, nor did I think much about him between his visits. During most of the time my pen and thoughts were occupied with other matters. . . . .

"While writing these letters I was generally in a state of semi-consciousness, so that, until I read the message over afterwards, I had only a vague idea of what it contained. In a few instances I was so nearly unconscious that as I laid down the pencil I had not the remotest idea of what I had written; but this did not often happen."

These are, of course, the usual characteristics and concomitants of mediumistic productions. Of the various hypotheses upon which such writings are explained, the first—that of deliberate deceit—constitutes a charge which few who read the book will be likely to bring. That they are "the lucubrations of my own subconscious mind" is quite possible, but that theory "does not explain the first letter signed 'X' that came before I knew my friend was dead," unless we assume a very far reaching and extraordinary knowledge on the part of the subconscious self—and assume also that it would "set out upon a long and laborious deception of me on a premise which had not been suggested to it by my own objective mind or that of any other person." Therefore, Mrs. Barker says, "If anyone asks the question, What do I myself think as to whether these letters are genuine communications from the invisible world, I should answer that I believe they are. In the personal and suppressed portions reference was often made to past events and to possessions of which I had no knowledge, and these references were verified. This leaves untouched the favorite telepathic theory of the psychologists. But if these letters were telepathed to me, by whom were they telepathed? Not by my friend who was present at the writing of many of them, for their contents were as much a surprise to her as to me. I wish, however, to

state that I make no scientific claims about this book, for science demands tests and proofs. . . . As evidence of a soul's survival after bodily death, it must be accepted or rejected by each individual according to his or her temperament, experience and inner conviction as to the truth of its contents."

My own temperament and experience—I should like it to be observed that I do not say my "inner conviction as to the truth of its contents"—are such as to lead me to give ready assent to this conclusion of Mrs. Barker's, and I am quite willing to deal with these letters as "genuine communications from the invisible world." The precise meaning to be given to the word "genuine," when thus applied to automatic writings, may well be questioned; but, even if we allow it to retain its fullest significance, there are certain things which we must note—things that are universally true of all letters, automatic or not. No matter what may be the subject of a letter, its primary revelation is of the mind and nature of its author. The American tourist, writing home to some little country village a description of Paris and its customs, is actually describing not Paris but himself. If any support were necessary for the truth of this statement it could be found in all the present talk about a "new" Paris and a "new" France. France is not new—but the oldest of European nations, and its traditions and its character have continued unbroken for over a thousand years. Today, in the great light of war,—the searcher of the soul's of nations as of men—her soul stands forth as it has always stood in danger or in crisis, and we gaze in awe upon it as a new creation. And why? Because the life of that soul is and has ever been so deep and strong and rich that it has offered to every man whatsoever thing he himself sought of it. To one it has been the great treasure house of art. To another it has been the ancient mistress of all learning, forever renewing her youth in the tireless, unremitting labour of her savants. To others it has meant the rue de la Paix and the avenue de l' Opera, the milliner's shops, and source of bargains and of fashions; while to still others it has appeared only as the cafés of the Boulevards, of Montmatre or the Quartier Latin. He who writes of Paris writes always of himself.

If this be true of any effort to describe an earthly city—if each man finds there that which his own taste and temperament led him to seek and have taught him to see—it is inconceivable that it should not be true in still greater measure of any effort to describe the Kingdom of the Heavens. He who writes of it must also and always be writing of himself; and the most "genuine" account of after-death states must be subject to precisely the same limitations as would be the equally "genuine" account by a Mexican cowboy of the contents of the Bibliotéque Nationale. It would take a master of life to describe the one, as it would exhaust the resources of human sympathy and learning to describe the other. Nor must we assume—as for some unknown reason most of our generation seem to assume—that the Kingdom of the Heavens and the world of after-death consciousness are synonymous. The more

one reads of such writings as these letters—though I confess at once that my own curiosity in regard to such has not been extensive—the more convinced one is that if heaven exists so also does hell: and that what is felt and described as heaven by one would constitute a very complete hell for another. Let us, therefore, not make the gross error of regarding these *Letters from a Living Dead Man* as descriptive of either heaven or hell or of "the invisible world" that includes them both. They are descriptive of the after-death consciousness of Mr. ——, as he was able to write of it through the hand of Mrs. Barker.

Of Mr. ——, beyond the fact that he was not a spiritualist, Mrs. Barker only tells us: "'X' was not an ordinary person. He was a well known lawyer nearly seventy years of age, a profound student of philosophy, a writer of books, a man whose pure ideals and enthusiasms were an inspiration to everyone who knew him." She does not add—what the letters themselves make apparent—that the dominant note of his life was intellectual curiosity, which, he naively assumes to be the purest and highest of motives; and that he was ignorant alike of any great love and of the meaning of devotion—whether to a cause or to God or to man. It is, in consequence, his curiosity that holds his consciousness at the hour of death, that moulds the forms of its later states, and whose gratification constitutes the major portion of his heaven. He is not, however, devoid of kindliness or without ambition to do good to his fellows. To this latter ambition he himself ascribes his desire to record his experiences (p. 149).

"My object in writing these letters is primarily to convince a few persons—to strengthen their certainty in the fact of immortality, or the survival of the soul after the bodily change which is called death. Many think they believe who are not certain whether they believe or not. If I can make my presence as a living and vital entity felt in these letters, it will have the effect of strengthening the belief in certain persons in the doctrine of immortality.

"This is a materialistic age. A large percentage of men and women have no real interest in the life beyond the grave. But they will all have to come out here sooner or later, and perhaps a few will find the change easier, the journey less formidable, by reason of what I shall have taught them. Is it not worth while? Is it not worth a little effort on your part as well as on mine?

"Any person approaching the great change who shall seriously study these letters and lay their principles to heart, and who shall will to remember them after passing out, need not fear anything."

In an earlier communication he explains his reasons for writing, more or less fragmentary and desultory letters, rather than attempting to dictate a more imposing work (p. 118).

"If I had set out to write a scientific treatise of the life on this side, I should have begun in quite a different way from this. In the first place, I should have postponed the labour about ten years, until

all my facts were pigeon-holed and docketed; then I should have begun at the beginning and dictated a book so dull that you would have fallen asleep over it, and I should have had to nudge you from time to time to pick up the pencil fallen from your somnolent hand.

"Instead, I began to write soon after coming out, and these letters are really the letters of a traveller in a strange country. They record his impressions, often his mistakes, sometimes perhaps his provincial prejudices; but at best they are not a rehash of what somebody else has said."

It is these mistakes, ignorances and prejudices—revealed on every page in entire unconsciousness by the writer—that have done more than anything else to make the book interesting and provocative of thought to the student of Theosophy. One will search in vain through its pages for any coherent doctrine that has not been far more clearly and fully expounded in the literature of the Theosophical Society. The whole philosophic and intellectual background of the book is, in the narrow and popular meaning of the word, theosophical. Reincarnation, karma, above all, the fact that man determines for himself the nature of the world in which he lives, are taken for granted and illustrated in letter after letter. But though "X" states this latter fact with the utmost clearness, as perhaps the basic law of the afterdeath states, and though he sees and relates its working—often very amusingly—in the case of those with whom he meets and talks, he is apparently blissfully unconscious that all that he himself sees and relates must be self-coloured and self-determined in precisely the same way.

He writes, for example (p. 59): "Those people who think of their departed friends as being all-wise, how disappointed they would be if they could know that the life on this side is only an extension of the life on earth! If the thoughts and desires there have been only for material pleasures, the thoughts and desires here are likely to be the same. I have met veritable saints since coming out; but they have been men and women who held in earth life the saintly ideal, and who now are free to live it.

"Life can be so free here! There is none of the machinery of living which makes people on earth life such slaves. In our world a man is held only by his thoughts. If they are free, he is free.

"Few, though, are of my philosophic spirit. There are more saints here than philosophers, as the highest ideal of most persons, when intensely active, has been towards the religious rather than the philosophic life."

And again (p. 94) he writes: "Do you not understand that what you believe you are going to be out here is largely determinative of what you will be." This theme is illustrated by many stories of people whom he meets: the story of the woman who was still finding fault with her food—poor soul, it was her only enjoyment while on earth; the story of the materialist who had set his mind and will stubbornly against the possibility of any consciousness after death, and who, in consequence,

is sunk in a profound unconsciousness deeper than any sleep, till "X" obtains his awakening at the hands of his "Teacher."

This "Teacher," "X" regards as an adept or Master; yet as we read what is said of and by him we are not reminded of the Masters of whom Theosophy teaches, but rather of a phrase of X's own: "The average college professor is not a being of supreme wisdom, whether here or there."

It is to those who are perfected in devotion that the promise of spiritual knowledge is made. "X" finds what he seeks. When he was about to die, he determined, he tells us, to carry with him memory, philosophy and reason. In their enjoyment he spends—as he had wished—his devachanic period; wandering through purgatory, heaven and hell, content to observe and study. But because at no point can he bring the light of love to bear on what he sees, because no greater will than his own ever moves him, because to nothing has he even the beginning of devotion, he forever misses the heart of what he looks upon; and the sentimental vision of his "Beautiful Being" is the travesty his temperament works upon what should be the communion of love. Such travesties do not make pleasant reading; and the self-complacent patronage of his attitude to all about him—to things sacred as well as profane—is so much more than unpleasant that it can only be described as revolting in its sacrilege. Yet we have to remember that this self-complacent conceit of his intellect must have been fostered through long years here on earth, and that suddenly to have stripped him of it would have been, indeed, to have plunged him into what would have been for him a hell. We must ardently desire to be rid of our faults, before either life or death can suddenly free us from them. There is no evidence that "X" ever wished to learn the lessons of humility. We have also to remember that what is sacred cannot be made less sacred because ignorance and conceit may travesty it. Only he is injured who accepts this travesty as truth, and few readers of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY are likely to make such an error.

To many readers the book may do far more harm than good, as it contains much that is true, and as half truths are more misleading than falsehood. To read it for these truths, for what it may show us of the laws of life or death, would be sheer waste of time for anyone who has made any study of Theosophy. But if we come to it as a study in psychology, seeking the causes for the blindness and the errors which it reveals, it can aid us in an undertaking that may be wholly beneficial. The causes of blindness, the roots of error, are in us as in "X." Day by day, in the desires we foster or let live unchecked, we are creating the forces that will mould our after-death state, determining our own heaven or hell. That which we desire we shall be given. The secret longing of the heart will be enacted openly. This is the eternal law; and we, who know it to be the law, have need to pause and judge our hearts before we are judged by them. What future are we making for ourselves?

H. B. M.

PAUL THE DISCIPLE

II.

At the Feet of Gamaliel

"I AM a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers."

Paul, as he spoke, was standing on the steps of the Roman guard-house which overlooked the great courtyard of the temple. Under the shadow of the holy shrine on Mount Moriah, made sacred by the Master's footsteps, he told the story of his life, inspired by this splendid background for his oration, as, five or six years earlier, he had stood under the shadow of the Acropolis of Athens, and, looking up to the pillared beauty of the Parthenon, had repeated the verse of the great Hymn to Zeus, "For we are also His offspring!" It was the first day of his bondage, the first day of many years when he wore the chains upon his wrists, the chains that clank and rattle through all the epistles of his bondage: "Paul the prisoner, Paul in chains."

And now, speaking in the contemporary dialect of Hebrew, the current speech of Aram, and for that reason called Aramaic; standing in face of an audience pre-eminently Hebrew, Paul went back in memory to the days, some thirty years before, the great days of his studentship, when, at the feet of Gamaliel, his heart was fired and enkindled by the splendid epic of Israel, the grand story of God's way with the Nation that centered about this temple on Moriah, about the citadel of Zion, that David made his capital, after the kingdom had passed away from Paul's prototype, Saul the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin.

We see the Jerusalem of Paul's youth, of the years, let us say, from 20 to 30, through the terrible clouds of the great tragedy, that darkness that rested there from the sixth hour to the ninth, when the earth trembled, and the veil of the great shrine on Moriah was rent from top to bottom; we rightly see, in the utter destruction that came, in the year 70, upon the City of the King, the punishment, the righteous Nemesis for the black deed of Golgotha, when the whole nation cried out, invoking their inevitable doom, "His blood be upon our heads and on our children's!" And we think, perhaps, that in the Jerusalem of Paul's student days, there was nothing but the bitter wrath, the iron bigotry, that crucified the Master. Without doubt these were already latent there, but they had not come forth from their lurking-place in passionate, rancorous hearts; and there was much that was full of aspiration, of sunnier, gentler spirit; something of the inspiration that breathes in the more beautiful of the psalms: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

There was such a period of expansion and aspiration, just before the Master began openly to teach. It is foreshadowed in the scene of his own boyhood in the temple; we catch the echo of it in his passionate, heart-breaking outcry of infinite regret: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" There was aspiration; but the age-long tragedy is, that there was not aspiration enough. There was a deep passionate interest in the things of religion, that kept these men about the Master, hanging on his words; but there was the terrible darkness and hardness of heart beneath it, that turned the impulse of religion into passionate hatred.

Of the sunnier years, of which the Master had said, "if I had not come, ye had not had sin," Gamaliel is still remembered as the greatest light; the revered doctor, the man of supreme culture, who gave form to the thought of the age, and incarnated it in himself. He may have been one of those doctors with whom the boy Jesus talked in the temple, both hearing them and asking them questions. As a Pharisee, he held the belief in the resurrection, in the constant ministry of angels, which contrasted with the legalist materialism of the official Sadducees; the one speech of his that is recorded, is full of the spirit of a wise and gentle tolerance: "But there stood up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honour of all the people, and commanded to put the men forth a little while. And he said unto them, 'Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves as touching these men, what ye are about to do . . . I say unto you, Refrain from these men and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown: but if it be of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found to be fighting against God.'"

One wonders what would have been the difference in the history of the world, if this wise, honoured doctor, who thus manfully and tolerantly defended Peter and the other apostles, had come forward as courageously a few months earlier, when their Master was on trial in the same way. There was a chance for a man to change all history. He might have held a place in the Creed, not, like Pilate, a place of eternal shame, but of high honour and renown.

Be this as it may, it was at the feet of this wise, gentle, highly honoured doctor that Paul passed his student years, his mind already full of Greek culture, of the orations of the famous Greek Platonists and Stoics of Tarsus; of the Tarsian memories of Alexander the Great, of Julius Cæsar, of Antony and Cleopatra and her splendid pageant upon the river Cydnus. Paul's mind, thus aroused and enkindled, now swung from Hellas to Israel; and during the months and years of his studentship under Gamaliel, he filled his heart and soul, his imagination and his memory, with the splendid passages of his national scriptures, the expounding of which made the substance of Gamaliel's lectures, as of all the doctors of the law.

During these formative years of Paul's life, the great genius among the Jews was Philo of Alexandria, who, with the soul of a mystic and a Platonist, re-read the Hebrew scriptures as a magnificent allegory, the revelation of the Logos, the "Mind of God." It is certain that Philo enjoyed an unrivaled authority throughout the whole Jewish world, which extended from Babylon to Rome, from the shores of the Black Sea to Egypt, and it is impossible that Philo's works and Philo's thoughts should not have been known at Jerusalem, during the years when Paul sat at the feet of Gamaliel, which were also the years of the ministry of Jesus. Since the writings of Paul are full of the ideas of Philo, while, at the same time he practically never uses the words and phrases that are most characteristic of Philo, though both are writing Greek, it would seem certain that he came to Philo's ideas, not directly, not by his own reading, but indirectly, through some intermediary; and one may hazard the guess that this intermediary was no other than Paul's master and instructor, Gamaliel, whose spirit, so far as we are able to judge it, is thoroughly in harmony with the spirit of Philo. It is probable that, lecturing at Jerusalem, under the shadow of the great temple, Gamaliel would use the Hebraic dialect which is called Aramaic; that, in quoting Philo in his lectures, if our hypothesis be correct, he would translate his thoughts and phrases from Alexandrian Greek to Aramaic; and that Paul, thus receiving Philo's ideas in Aramaic, later retranslated them for himself into Greek, often choosing other words than those Philo had used, though following Philo's ideas very faithfully.

Be this as it may, it is certain that Paul did study the Law and the Prophets under Gamaliel, and that, in his interpretation of the Law and the Prophets, he follows in Philo's footsteps, besides accepting the whole Platonic background of Philo's thought. But it is not so much with this aspect of Paul's work and thought that I wish just now to deal, but rather with the impression made on his mind by the grandiose Hebrew scriptures. If we take pains, we can almost follow the working of Paul's mind, as he listened to Gamaliel's lectures, almost reproduce the emotions which were awakened in his heart by this or the other famous passage from the Book of the Law.

I have already written very fully of Paul's understanding of the first great story in the Hebrew Scriptures: the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, of the Serpent's temptation, and of the Fall of Man. It is enough, at present, to say that Paul understood the whole story as an allegory, exactly as Philo did; and that the part which Adam and the Fall have been made to play in dogmatic theology largely rests on a misunderstanding and on the persistent mistranslation of Paul's words: "As in the Adam all die, even so in the Christ shall all be made alive." The Adam and the Christ mean here the natural and the spiritual man, the latter vivified by, and blended with the very life of the ever-living Christ, the Master.

The next great story in the Books of the Law, which made a

profound and indelible impression on the mind and imagination of Paul the student, is the story of the covenant with Abraham, as told in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis:

After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is my heir. And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir: but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord: and he counted it to him for righteousness. . . .

It is a passage of wonderful beauty, and one may boldly say that no passage in the whole compass of the Scriptures meant so much to Paul, or so greatly swayed his heart and mind. In the first place, it was because of his profound and passionate belief in the miraculous destiny and mission of the seed of Abraham, thus promised to him under the glowing stars of the Arabian desert, that Paul, conceiving this destiny to be in some sense menaced by the mission of Jesus, with the Master's unsparing condemnation of the Jews, thought it his duty to destroy the work of the disciples, the task he had in hand upon the Damascus road. And, in the second place, after Paul, through personal contact with the Master, beginning on the road to Damascus, had divined the splendid truth that precisely in and through the work of the Master was the promise to Abraham spiritually fulfilled, this passage took on for him a new and more majestic meaning: he saw a first covenant merged in a second covenant; an old testament transformed and resurgent in a new testament, and it is precisely through Paul's vision and application of this splendid metaphor, that the books concerning Jesus the Master are called the books of the New Testament, unto this day.

It was at that very same period of Abraham's life that he came into contact with the great, mysterious figure of Melchizedek King of Salem, and to the study of that meeting, we owe the superb passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which Jesus is magnificently called a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

We may say, therefore, that this period in the life of Abraham, the meeting with Melchizedek, the vision under the starry sky, filled the whole background of Paul's mind; and that through Paul's love for this story, it has become of the first significance in the spiritual history of two thousand years, deeply colouring all subsequent thought concerning the work of Jesus, as the fulfilment of the promise, and the standing of Jesus as the great High Priest. No other passage, therefore, in the whole of scripture, made such an overwhelming impression on the mind and heart of Paul.

In the story of the Exodus, Paul's mind held and brooded over the miraculous manna, which fell from heaven, to feed the Children of Israel in the wilderness; and, with the tendency to see allegory everywhere, which was the essence of the school of Philo, he later turned the story of the manna to a new and unexpected use: The disciples in the regions of northern Greece were well supplied with the good things of the world; the saints at Jerusalem, the first and central group of disciples, were miserably poor; therefore Paul gathered of the abundance of Macedonia, and gave it to the older group of disciples, thus bringing about an equality: As it is written he says, He that had gathered much had nothing over: and he that had gathered little had no lack.

But the central element of the Exodus, for Paul, as for all subsequent time, was the giving of the Commandments, the majority of which Paul quotes, not once but many times, citing, indeed, all those which most closely define personal conduct. The whole majestic narrative of the law-giving on Mount Sinai was vivid and living in Paul's memory, and he made constant use of it in writing to his disciples.

From Leviticus and Numbers, Paul quotes such phrases as these: Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. . . . I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. . . . The Lord will show who are his. . . . Depart from the tents of these wicked men. . . .

From the Book of Deuteronomy, Paul quotes more at length. There are detached sentences like these: . . . at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. . . . For he that is hanged is accursed of God. . . . Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. . . . Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. . . . Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day. . . .

But the most beautiful passage in Deuteronomy cited by Paul is that in the thirtieth chapter, which he adapts to his own purpose in writing to the Romans:

For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. . . .

This eloquent passage, Paul uses thus:

For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one

that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the Law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh unto thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.

This is a very fair example of the way in which Paul turns to his own uses the texts of the Old Testament, following the spirit, not the letter. It is in entire harmony with the method of Philo, the method which Philo himself calls Allegory; in entire harmony, indeed, with the whole Rabbinical method of exegesis at that time, for which a text meant anything that it could possibly be made to mean, either by a strained literalism or by the most liberal use of allegorical interpretation.

There is another passage in the book of Deuteronomy, which was peculiarly dear to Paul, and indeed to all the devout men of his time and nation: the passage which is beautifully suggested by the author of the Apocalypse, And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.

The song of Moses comes at the very end of the five Books of the Law, introduced by these words, And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended:

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. . . . Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him. . . .

From this beautiful song Paul quotes not once but many times; he has a perfect ear for the most eloquent and poetical phrases, images, histories.

This practically completes the list of Paul's quotations from the five books which we know as the Pentateuch, but which Paul thought of as the Torah, the Books of the Law. As we saw, three great passages

stood out in his memory, as being of supreme significance: The story of Adam, which he regarded as an allegory; the covenant which the Lord made with Abraham, and which he re-interprets in terms of the new covenant of Christ; and the life of Moses, from the tremendous days on Sinai, with the giving of the law, to the swan-song that closed the great Prophet's ministry. Of the three, the promise to Abraham stands out in brightest colours; it was so deeply engraven on his heart that, through his love of it, through the constant return of his mind to it, we have come to think of that promise as the first covenant, rather than the old traditional first covenant, which God made with man when the flood abated, setting the rainbow to it as his seal.

From the book of Joshua, Paul quotes the story of Achan and the accursed thing, the wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, which he secretly took from among the spoils; using it to underline the secret sin of one of the disciples at Corinth.

If we are to attribute to Paul the great letter to the Hebrews, as I am convinced that we should, then in a single verse we have summed up Paul's readings in the book of Judges:

And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. . . .

There is here, of course, a summary of the whole later history of Israel and Judah, from the days of the Exodus to the days of Daniel, who "quenched the violence" of the burning fiery furnace. But from the historical books Paul quotes with peculiar love two passages, God's promise to David, and the splendid protest of Elijah. The former is introduced thus:

And it came to pass that night that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in? . . . I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: . . . and when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. . . .

The latter passage, the appeal of Elijah, Paul quotes to confirm himself in the hope that, in spite of their putting Jesus to death, a remnant of Israel might be saved. The appeal runs thus:

And he (Elijah) said, I have been very jealous for the Lord of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and

I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. . . . Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. . . .

May we not believe that Paul saw in the majestic, lonely figure of Elijah, whom the people sought to slay, a likeness to his own fate, a prophet in daily danger? And did he not remember, as he pondered over the sending of Elijah to the wilderness of Damascus, his own momentous days in that same wilderness, after the decisive meeting with the Master, on the high road to the city; the days he thus describes: When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. . . .

From the poetical books, Psalms, Proverbs and Job, Paul quotes so abundantly that, to assemble all the passages he cites, would mean, to transcribe many pages; above all, he chooses those passages which, at that time, were held to be prophecies of the Messiah, for whose coming all Israel looked. Very many quotations from the Psalms are in the epistle to the Hebrews. One cannot lay the same stress on these, as illustrating Paul's mind, until it is more generally admitted that he is the author of that epistle.

Among the Prophets, Paul quotes from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Hosea, but much more abundantly from Isaiah, and almost always passages of the Messianic hope, in which he loves to find foretellings of the Christ. The most notable of these passages are the following:

Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence . . . and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble and fall, and be broken . . . I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and wonders in Israel. . . .

For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return. . . .

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with

the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. . . .

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! . . .

He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. . . .

Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him. . . .

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. . . .

From the remaining books of the Prophets, Paul quotes a sentence from Ezekiel: My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people;—and a sentence from Hosea: I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God. . . .

Though there be, as has been said, much difference of opinion as to the authorship of the epistle to the Hebrews, we may, on the supposition that it was written by Paul, conclude our citations with a passage from that epistle, which, in a way, sums up the entire Old Testament, as it came to be understood by the writers and followers of the New:

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon his staff. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not

afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets. . . .

Here, we have cited the Books of the Law, the Histories, the Prophets; and, without doubt, in the verses that follow, there is a summary of the later national wars, which are detailed in the books we call Apocrypha.

Out of the fullness of the heart, the mouth speaketh; and we may confidently hold that this wonderful knowledge of the whole cycle of the Hebrew scriptures, which Paul so continually shows, was gained by him in those student days which he has himself outlined for us, when he studied the Law at the feet of Gamaliel.

In this way, from Paul's own letters, we can glean the treasurers of his mind and memory, perceiving the very impress made upon his heart by the great writings of the holy dead. And always it is the most beautiful and significant passage or sentence, the fairest image, the noblest phrase that we find him quoting. He shows himself a great poet in these, his borrowings from the old Hebrew writers, just as, in what he took from Philo, the Platonic background of his thought, he shows himself a profound philosopher.

When we thus trace the debt of Paul to Gamaliel, who first led his footsteps through these devious ways, we cannot but feel once more, with a renewed poignance of regret, the profound tragedy that Gamaliel, who spoke so bravely on behalf of Peter and John, could not have spoken as wisely, as courageously, for their Master, when he was brought to trial only a few months before. To his intercession, Peter and John owed it, that their lives were spared. Peter lived thereafter some three and thirty years; John, nearly twice as long, each of them doing work of world-wide import, writing words that have proven immortal. What, then, might Gamaliel have accomplished, had he won, by his wise eloquence, the conservation of that far greater life; if the work then cut short by death, had been continued; the divine, compassionate, still unfinished work?

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

LETTERS TO FRIENDS

XVI

Dear Friend:

YOU are asking of yourself that which the Master does not ask of you, and are striving to solve problems that are not now yours and that may never be yours. If you can see the one next step ahead, if you have the will and strength to take that step, you have all that is needful. The past is past. The future is not yet. The present alone is yours to make or mar: to prove you man or weakling, faithful or recreant. And yet you let its golden moments pass—the golden moments that turn into the leaden days because they are not seized—while you stand mourning for the opportunities that are no more, and fearful of the future that may never be. We are not meant to bear this triple burden. Our present strength is for our present need, and is sufficient for that need. Let the dead past bury its dead; and for the future: "Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."

Try to understand this. You will come to understand it if you meditate upon it and act upon it. Meditation will bring the light and faith to make action possible, but only as you act will you really know; for knowledge comes from experience, and experience from action. This is the basic fact of consciousness, the central thread of obedience that is the essence of discipleship,—the instant, moment by moment, obedience in action to the inner movement of the Holy Ghost. That obedience is all that concerns you or any man. Its demand is never abstract or theoretical, never of the past or of the future, but always concrete and definite, always of the present. And with the demand comes the strength to fulfil it; for both demand and strength are but the movement of the greater life that supports our own. We fail only as we ourselves divide what is given us as one,—as we apply to other purposes the full cash payment that accompanies every order which life sends us.

See what it is that you are doing, and upon what you are spending the strength that is given you. These long hours of painful introspection, of weakening doubts and self-distrust and self-created fears—what part have these in the life of the Holy Spirit? Surely you cannot think the Master asks them of you, or that the life you draw moment by moment from the full heart of Being was meant to be so dissipated. And if you do so squander your gift of time and power of brooding thought, can you wonder that you have scant energy or courage left with which to meet the demands that are really made upon you?

Yes, you say, that is just it. But how can I help these doubts? How dare I trust myself, and even assume to meet such obligations as must rest on those who would follow Him? My heart turns in a thousand ways to earth, and not to heaven. I have not mastered one of the rules of discipleship. Nor can I even find the honest will to master them. I do not wish to outwear pleasure and pain: to have my eyes incapable of tears, my ears without sensitiveness, my will and life without ambition. There is no lust of the flesh or of the world that is not mine—that does not seem to me to have a rightful place in life, with gifts to give for which life is the richer, not the poorer. Because men use them evilly are they evil in themselves? And I—I want them all. I want them rightly, I tell myself; not wrongly. But want them I do. And in my heart they lie, their good and evil so inextricably intertwined and blended that I can neither take nor leave them. How can I help but doubt? How can I follow when I cannot move; act when I cannot even will? And if I do not follow, if I do not will and act, there is no peace or rest or shred of honour left me. For through it all there is a call that will not cease, an inner urging from the depths of me,—a loyalty that is crucified in each instant's hesitation, and whose death would be the death of my own soul.

Do you think I do not know this ancient battle ground of truth and falsehood, cowardice and courage, self and loyalty? Do you think yourself the first that has shrunk from the combat? Turn to the first chapter of the Bhagavad Gita and read again the dialogue of Krishna and Arjuna. You cannot escape the battle once the call to it has sounded. To refuse to fight, to be but driven by the press of those who do fight or fly, is to prove yourself a coward, false to all to which you owe allegiance,—false to all that makes a man.

But the battle is not what you now think it. You do not have to meet at one and the same time, single handed and alone, all these forces that you see ranged hostilely against you. Neither do you now have to strike blindly in the dark, ignorant of whether your blow will fall on friend or enemy (though there come times when so it seems to you). All that you are asked is to follow where your Master leads you; and only that is your foe which stands between you and your obedience.

Can you not see this? It would be as you think it if we were masterless men; if we were ourselves, our personal selves, the captains of our own souls. Then, indeed, we should have cause for fears and doubts, and need to do what we know we cannot do: sift all the good and evil in us into separate camps and choose between them. But strong and fine as that phrase sounds, it is mercifully a lie. No man is "captain of his soul." Were he such he would be not man but devil. The soul itself is captain; and it is for us to recognize its captaincy, to follow faithfully its leadership, knowing that it, too, is "one under authority," moving in obedience to its Master's will. It is the Master who plans. We have but to obey.

I think that it is the very simplicity of discipleship that makes it so difficult for men to understand and to accept it. What is that inner urging that you feel ceaselessly pressing upon you? Is it not the simple call "Follow me"? It is possible that to other and stronger souls it may come in different terms; but to us, to you and to me, who are but babes in the spiritual life, it is the simple call of the father to his child. Why must we make such a to-do about leaving the toys with which we are playing? From whose hand did we receive them if not from his; and does not the Father know the things of which we have need? Can we not trust him? We have been using far too grown-up similes in our talk about battle-fields and enemies. We are babes, and must be fed upon the milk for babes; and nine-tenths of these fine heart-searchings of ours is but our unwillingness to take our pudgy toes from our own mouths that we may be given suck of life. We are convinced that, if once we let go, we shall be toe-less and empty-mouthed forever.

But enough of similes. Let us try to look at the situation as directly and simply as possible. You find a very tangled skein of desires in your own heart, good and evil lying side by side and so hopelessly knotted together that you cannot separate them even in thought. You do not have to separate them. That is the marvel and the inestimable value of discipleship. You have only to follow where the Master calls. As you follow, the knots one by one are untied; the good and evil separated, the issue made clear cut. Then, and then only, have you need to choose, and need to fight. If you choose rightly, and gain victory for the good over the evil, you are led on till the next knot is untied and the issue again made plain. The thread of good is always in the Master's hands. As we follow, it is freed for us from the evil to which we ourselves attach it; and being thus freed becomes our own,—something that we can take with us wheresoever we may go.

The secret of it all is thus obedience. Is this a difficult concept? Do we not know what we mean when we speak of following the Master? We hear his voice in two ways very clearly. First, and most unmistakably, in our outer duties. If we are honest there can be little doubt of these; and if, in any given time or circumstance there is an honest doubt, it need trouble us little if we are faithful where no doubt exists. We are too prone to excuse our neglect of the duties that we know by talking to ourselves of possible duties that we do not know; and to do this is to turn away from our path. The second way is in the inner voice of conscience. It is not so clear as is the voice of duty. For we have corrupted it, and let our minds explain it away so often that now we cannot always tell just why it is sore and troubled. But here also, if we will be obedient to what is unmistakable we need not fear that we shall be left to go far wrong in silence or in blindness. If we listen to these two voices—to the voice of duty and the voice of conscience—obeying them *as the Master's* voice; and because of our will to follow

him, we *do* follow him; and, following, are his disciples. It is as simple as this.

The question that confronts you, therefore, is whether you have this will. You are not concerned at all to disentangle the good and evil that may lie in the "lusts of the world and the flesh," in personal ambition, or in the extraordinary caricature your fancy has painted of what the disciple should be. All that concerns you is whether your desires and fears are stronger than your will to be faithful to your duty and true to the unquestioned standards that you know within your own heart. Will you take pleasure at the expense of duty or of conscience? If so, discipleship is not for you. Nor should you sully it with such a thought. But if not, if the good that may lie in the things of the world be not for you a greater good than your soul's loyalty, then the path is open to you; and though you stand now at its very portal, ignorant as yet of all it has to teach, there is no height to which it may not lead you. The test does not lie where you cannot distinguish good from evil. It lies where the issue is open and clear cut.

Do you see this now? I wish so earnestly that I could help you to see it. It is your own truth that you must be true to—what the Master asks of you as you are, and asks now. The law for angels is not the law for man, until he shares the light by which the angels' hearts are lit. Do not think that I am lowering your standards. You will not think so if for one hour you try to live by what I have said. But it is only by living that you can learn.

Let me try to take a case that is not yours—so that you can see it in truer perspective. Let us imagine a man, dominated, as you are not, by love of personal comfort. He might read, as you have read, that line in *Light on the Path* that bids us kill out our desire for comfort; and it might seem to him that comfort was a good, a thing that rested him and gave him strength for his work and made his life richer and not poorer. Perhaps it is hard for you to imagine him getting all worked up about this, and picturing a comfortless existence, and asking himself whether such were really his ideal, and whether he could really sacrifice all comfort for ever and ever, and whether, loving comfort, he could really be a disciple, or even dare to try. Such a procedure would seem to you very childish and hysterical and preeminently silly. You would wish to say to him: "Man, it does not matter a rap whether comfort is in itself a good or not. It is not half so interesting and vital as the things you are missing while you cling to it. You know perfectly well that no matter how comfortable you are in your arm chair by the fire, you would get up without a thought if something you were really interested in called you out. All this talk of sacrifice is moonshine. You would not even know you were making a sacrifice once your interest was roused. You are just being a sissy."

It would be quite clear to you that it was not comfort which was the evil but the way in which his desire for it impoverished his life

and interfered with all his other desires. You would see the significance of the wording of the rule: "Kill out *desire* for comfort." You would see, too, that if he were really a man and really saw his own condition, he would attack that inordinate softness of his by deliberately denying it: by choosing the uncomfortable instead of the comfortable chair, etc., etc. In other words, as far as this weakness of his was concerned, he would follow Mr. Judge's advice of never doing anything which the lower self desired for itself alone. This is what he would do if he were strong and could see. And by doing it he would gain the power to be comfortable—really to enjoy comfort—without impoverishing his life and sacrificing to his weakness those about him.

But if he were not strong, if he were nothing but a child unable to see and so unwilling to will, you would urge him at least not to let his imaginary fears of a comfortless existence, his metaphysical speculations and doubts as to the good or evil of his desire, keep him from pursuing the unquestioned good his life offered him. You would know that if he did pursue any real aim with all his heart, so that he was willing to sacrifice his comfort concretely for it, even though he were unwilling to do it abstractly, that then little by little these repeated concrete surrenders of his comfort would wear away its hold upon him.

It is this—and far more than this—which life itself does for us once we give its direction into the Master's hands. We can leave aside our abstract doubts and fears and metaphysical questionings. Resolved moment by moment to do the duty of that moment as perfectly as in us lies, to seize in each instant the highest good that instant offers, we cut through all these abstractions by the sword of definite obedience. We follow Him—our greatest good—careless of whether that which we leave behind be good or evil, knowing that all our good comes to us from Him and is safe only when held by Him.

Let me be quite frank. Though I said above that you must choose, you have in fact no choice. One does not choose one's duty. One either fulfils it or is false to it. You do not choose the Master. He has chosen you. And you are either loyal or disloyal—a man or a weakling. You have denied your manhood long enough. It is time you woke and willed, lest you bear in your soul that most scathing of all condemnations: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ISLAMIC IDEA

TO present in any detail the development of the Islamic idea after the death of its founder is the work of the Oriental historian. In the present space it is possible to give only the salient points, showing in a general way the trend which the faith has taken, and making clear the reason why Mohammedanism is often referred to as a scourge of the world. Some historians as they relate the facts of the great uprising just after the death of the Prophet,—a disturbance in which many of the tribes, taking advantage of the absence of strong authority, renounced their allegiance to return to their old rites and customs,—state that the faith was then seriously in jeopardy and that, except for the career of conquest already proposed, all would have been at an end. Of the desert tribes, many of whom were brought to allegiance originally by force of arms, this statement may be true; the greatness of Islam might have been immeasurably impaired. But to imply that all Islam was stirred by this motive, that the mighty empire which rose with such miraculous swiftness, rested on no firmer foundation than love of conquest, mere bloodthirstiness and desire for plunder, is doing a gross injustice to the true Moslems who were imbued with the spirit of the Prophet and devoted to the perpetuation of his work.

The first of these Companions to occupy the position of Caliph or Successor, was Abubeker, the father-in-law and closest friend of Mahomet, elected to the office on the day of the Prophet's death. Abubeker reigned but two years (A. D. 632-634), during which time he successfully put down the revolt of the disaffected and then turned the energies of the Saracen armies to the conquest of Syria, starting that mighty tide so soon to break over the tottering empires of Rome and Persia. His death occurred just as Damascus, the ancient city of Syria, fell into the hands of the Moslems, and by his appointment Omar, another of the early converts, succeeded to the Caliphate. The new Commander of the Faithful not only continued, but greatly extended his predecessor's policy of conquest. During his rule, Syria was completely subdued; large parts of Persia were subjugated, all of Egypt, and a part of Africa to the west. Already in a little over ten years from the death of the Prophet, a powerful empire had been built up.

The detailed story of this conquest as given in Ockley's *History of the Saracens* is interesting in the extreme,—a tale of the rapid fall of city after city in what had been, so short a time before, the most powerful empires of the world. But with individual battles we have to do here not so much as with the spirit in which they were fought, and

above all with the spirit of the commanders on whom rested the responsibility for the work. Of these leaders four men stand out in especial prominence: at home, Abubeker and Omar, the first two Caliphs, and in the field, Abu Obeidah and Kaled, two great generals.

The last named was so valiant and so zealous for the faith as to win the title of the Sword of God; fanatical from one point of view, to be sure, but a man of impetuous bravery and splendid courage, a warrior through and through. Many tales are told of his personal bravery, his good generalship, and his care and consideration of his men; one in particular, coming as it does from the despotic east, is interesting to note: a subordinate, aggrieved at being excluded from an important expedition, berated his general soundly, but Kaled "gave him very gentle and modest answers—for he was admirable in this respect that he knew no less how to govern his passions than to command an army, though to most great generals the latter frequently proves the easier task of the two."* On another occasion, though deposed from his generalship through favoritism, he continued, as a subordinate, to act with all his former vehemence and zeal, declaring that whosoever had the standard, he was resolved to fight under it for the propagation of religion. Abu Obeidah, his associate in the field, was as cautious and temperate, as pious and meek, as Kaled was impetuous and warlike, but the two generals were united in the intensity of their zeal. One instance after another is given of the sincerity with which they lived their religion, applying to daily life the teachings of the Prophet.

And still more fully was this the case in the lives of Abubeker and Omar, both men exemplary in their neglect of worldly things. Even after the victorious Saracens had made theirs the fabulous wealth of the Chosroes, Abubeker and Omar continued to live in the same simplicity which the Prophet had observed (so opposed were they to a departure from this standard that, by Omar's command, certain of the soldiers who ventured to dress in the silks they had captured, were dragged face downward in the dust). Abubeker is said never to have taken from the public treasury, in return for all his services, more than three drachmas (a gold piece in use at the time), for his personal needs, and Omar, on receiving from a foreign ruler the gift of a priceless jewel, sold it and placed the money in the treasury, with the remark that it would be more than he could answer for to the public. In contrast to the pomp and ceremony of later caliphs we find an interesting picture in the simple lives of these first successors of the Prophet, sitting on the steps of the Mosque, surrounded by beggars and friends alike, reading aloud the latest news from the field of battle, joining in the general thanksgiving for victories vouchsafed, and conferring with the people on matters of state. When his victorious generals sent word that Jerusalem had fallen but would submit only on condition that the articles of security be given by the Caliph in person, Omar with his customary

* Ockley: *History of the Saracens.*

lack of pretension, set out on the long journey at once with only his camel and two bags of provisions. And a signal instance of his good faith is shown in his refusal to pray in any Christian Church of Jerusalem, lest later followers make that an excuse to seize the Churches for their own worship, thereby violating the terms of the treaty.

The true spirit which actuated these men is best seen, perhaps, in the exhortation of Abubeker to one of his newly appointed generals; the latter was bidden "to take care to live religiously, and to make the enjoyment of the presence of God and a future state the end and aim of all his undertakings, to look upon himself as a dying man, always to have regard to the end of things; remembering that we must in a short time all die, and rise again and be called to an account. He was not to be inquisitive about men's private concerns, but take care that his men were diligent in reading the Koran," etc.* On a similar occasion when the Caliph, this time Omar, had finished speaking, the general asked and received permission to advise his ruler in return. " 'I bid you then (he proceeded) fear God more than men, and not the contrary; and love all the Mussulmans as yourself and your family, as well those at a distance as those near you. And command that which is praiseworthy, and forbid that which is otherwise.' Omar, all the while he spoke, stood looking steadfastly upon the ground, leaning his forehead upon his staff. Then he lifted up his head, and the tears ran down his cheeks, and he said, 'Who is able to do this without the divine assistance?' "

Such was the spirit that brought victory to the Saracens; absolute acceptance of the teachings of their Prophet, implicit faith in their God; "Allah Akbar," God is great, was the cry on every field of battle. Men fought for religion as an act of obedience to God; they fought with the assurance that the gates of paradise were open to none but champions of the cause; they accepted reverses as sent by God that the honors of martyrdom might be granted to the fallen. Utter fanaticism, we may call it, but against the power engendered by such faith what army could hope to stand. Other causes, it is true, aided in the conquest; the empires against which they fought were too vast to be manageable; many of the enemy, in the most responsible places were false to their trust and treachery added its weakening effect; the terms offered by the Saracens were such as to appeal strongly to a people who had little to lose by a change of rule. But even had these facts been otherwise, the Saracen armies were invincible and as Freeman in his *History and Conquests of the Saracens* says, "It was no sort of disgrace to the armies either of Rome or of Persia to have been discomfited by enemies like these. The ordinary and natural inducements of the soldier, average courage, average patriotism, average professional honor, could not possibly keep him up to a conflict with men whose whole spirit and motives savored of the extraordinary and supernatural."

By the hand of a malcontent from a subjugated tribe, Omar was assasinated and with his death came a change in the spirit of Islam.

Othman, his successor, was a man of considerable piety but possessed little talent for governing. He made the mistake, at the start, of removing various officials in the conquered territories and appointing in their places, his own friends and relatives. Through these and other impolitic acts he alienated his subjects; every means was employed by those opposed to him, to stir up sedition in the provinces, and after a stormy reign of twelve years he was besieged in his home by an army of his enemies and finally put to death.

With the ensuing election of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, began a period of far greater internal strife. Many people regarded Ali as the rightful successor at the death of Mahomet, many people regard him so to the present day, and the discord resulting therefrom has rent the Mohammedan world, again and again. To ignore entirely the struggles of the various factions each claiming the rightful succession to the caliphate (a struggle finally dividing the empire into three rival caliphates) would be to pass over the greater portion of Moslem history; but for the present purpose it is here sufficient to state that Moawiyah, the natural successor of Othman, accomplished the downfall of Ali, wrested from the latter's son the right to rule, and began a succession of fourteen caliphs of the Ommiade dynasty covering the years 661 to 750 A. D.

The characteristic of this rule were little different from those of any other oriental monarchy; we are told that the Ommiades were masters of slaves rather than leaders of free men. It is a period of tyranny on the one hand and rebellion on the other, yet, for the empire as a whole, a period of ever-increasing power, reaching its highest point at the close of the seventh and beginning of the eighth centuries, in the caliphates of Abdalmelik and Walid. Omar, less than a century before had made his chief fare barley-bread and water; knowing almost nothing of books, he had ordered the destruction of the Alexandrian library, with the remark, "What is contained in these books is either agreeable to what is written in the book of God (meaning the Koran) or it is not; if it be, then the Kəran is sufficient without them; if otherwise, it is fit they should be destroyed"; knowing even less of navigation, he first inquired of one of his generals what the ocean looked like, and then forbade all maritime expeditions on the part of the Saracens. In Abdalmelik and Walid the caliphs had reached the opposite extreme; they were men of luxurious habits and elegant tastes, living in the greatest magnificence. They gave their attention to architecture, and splendid edifices, richly adorned, were multiplied as monuments to their memory; they turned their attention to letters, and their literary favorites were overwhelmed with honors and riches; they extended their conquests by sea as well as by land, and everywhere the name of the Saracens became an object of terror. "While Walid was living in luxury at Damascus and gratifying his artistic tastes, his generals were fighting for his empire in Asia Minor, in Korassan, in Africa, and making his authority every-

where felt. They ravaged Cappadocia, Armenia, Pontus, and Galatia, and brought to Damascus the usual crowds of captives bearing rich spoils. They crossed the Oxus, drove before them the hordes of Turkestan, and captured the city of Bokhara; they went again to Samarkand and, after a siege, obliged it to pay a great tribute annually in gold and to contribute three thousand human beings every year to the slavemarts of Damascus; and they undermined the religion of the Magians; they overran Scinde, and penetrated in that direction as far as the great river of India."*

By 710, they had reached almost to the borders of China on the east, and on the west the first expedition across the straits of Gibraltar was undertaken. In Spain where the Goths had been ruling for some three hundred years, power lay now in the hands of Roderick, a recent usurper of the throne. The son of the previous ruler had retired to the African shore of the straits and regarding Musa, the general of the caliph, as a useful ally, negotiated a joint invasion of Spain. At first only a small party was sent, but so great was their success, so rich their offering of spoils and captives that a large army soon followed. With remarkable rapidity, the country was subdued: Roderick was killed; Elvira, Cordova, Toledo fell into the hands of the Saracens; even to the shores of the Bay of Biscay, the conquering armies advanced. Musa, filled with the assurance of victory, planned to return to Damascus by way of Constantinople, subduing the nations north of the Mediterranean, and completing the conquest of the entire ancient world. At this point however, he was suddenly recalled and arrived at Damascus with rich trains of booty, just at the death of the caliph.

The new government, in Spain, proved more moderate and liberal, and apparently more acceptable than the old. According to the treaties, the Christians were to remain undisturbed in their religion and were to enjoy entire security both for themselves and their property, providing only that they upheld the government and paid the tribute agreed upon. The Saracens continued their military expeditions, advancing over the Pyrenees into France, overrunning the Loire region, and the valley of the Rhone, and even going so far as the Rhine. But this time, it appears, little attempt was made at lasting conquest; their leaders were continually changing and the main object of their warfare was to sack, to pillage and to destroy. The year 732 brought a climax in the memorable battle of Tours,—one of the decisive battles of the world,—between the Saracens on the one hand and, on the other, the forces of Charles of Austrasia who there won his title of Charles Martel or Charles the Hammer. By the decisive victory of that day, the northward advance of the Saracens was effectually terminated and Charles Martel was left free to build up the power which later he bequeathed to his illustrious grandson, Charlemagne.

That the Saracen army made no further attempts on Frankish territory was due partly to difficulties arising at home, which necessitated its

* Gilman: *The Saracens.*

withdrawal from the western field. For with the death of Walid, the glory of the house declined. His successors, it is true, made an attempt against Constantinople during which, according to at least one historian, Christianity and civilization were in greater peril than ever before. But this attack proved unsuccessful and no subsequent monarchs of the line possessed more than moderate power or ability. To add to the difficulties of the situation there had been growing rapidly and in secret, a new faction, the Abassides, which claimed the right to the throne for the descendants of Abbas, an uncle of Mahomet. This party as well as the Alyites, had been preaching the coming of a new caliph, a true descendant of the Prophet, and exerting every effort to rouse hatred of the reigning dynasty. In 749 a great battle was fought between the two factions and Abu Abbas, the victorious leader of the Abassides, undertook the extermination of the entire house of the Ommiades, accomplishing his purpose with the exception of one man, who escaped into Africa and later, in the reign of Charlemagne, became head of the rival caliphate at Cordova.

The Abasside dynasty extended its rule over a period of five hundred years and in wealth and magnificence surpassed by far anything the Saracens had previously known. In the reign of their third Caliph, Mehdi, the ruler, on pilgrimage to Mecca, takes with him tents to protect him from the sun, camels laden with snow to cool the air, millions of gold coins to throw among the people, every possible contrivance to make the journey an easy one. And with the life of luxury came the inevitable sapping of strength, lessening of courage, weakening of moral fibre. This was a time of outward magnificence but of inward decay, and it is not surprising to learn that, far from continuing the former policy of conquest, "the armies of the caliphate were hardly sufficient to perform police duty at home." Even now, though, one army carried terror into the Roman world, besieged Constantinople, then under Empress Irene, and withdrew only after exacting tremendous tribute. This expedition was under the Caliph Mehdi, and but a few months after the death of the latter, there came to the throne the great Haroun al Rashid, famous in the *Arabian Nights,* "under whose rule Bagdad became magnificent almost beyond the power of words to express, to readers accustomed to the comparative simplicity of nineteenth century magnificence." Of the period of his rule, a few lines from Gilman's history give a most graphic description:

"It is a land of dreams to most of the world, but it was far otherwise to the citizens of Bagdad then. To them Haroun was a flesh-and-blood monarch; his scimetar was no fantasm of a dream; his caprices were not the entertaining story of a fascinating Persian genius; the brilliant Oriental imagination had not yet wrought out its rich pages of adventure and despotic marvels; the people of Bagdad did not smile at the erratic deeds of their chief ruler: to them he was one whose words made every subject tremble, lest the fate of the Barmecides,

perchance, might be theirs; lest the whirling scimetar of the executioner should cut through their own necks. The people—in that day did not enjoy the charms of the scenes they were surrounded by so much as we may now; for every step they took was dogged by fear—fear that was based upon ghastly experience of the tyranny and peremptory savagery of the 'good' Haroun al Rashid, of which poetry so gayly speaks to us today."

The first part of this rule was given over to luxury and ease and devoted to the cultivation of arts and letters. Later in life the Caliph undertook an expedition against Constantinople, but with what contrast to the wars of the first Saracens. They fought to gain glory in a future state, and to win realms for Allah and his Prophet; the wars of Haroun are said to be the plundering expeditions of a mere slave hunter. They were brought to an end by revolts and uprisings at home.

The reign of Haroun saw the passing of the glory of the Saracens. From this time on, there was steady and rapid decay not only political but religious as well. For years, there had been many religious sects holding to heresies of all sorts, creating dissension of greater or less importance, but never meeting with any general recognition or acceptance. But soon the Faithful were to see the strange sight of a caliph himself permitting the official declaration that the Koran was no longer decreed an eternal and uncreated book; of his accepting and promulgating the teaching that reason, not revelation is the only source of religion; even of his refusing to admit the prophetical claim of Mahomet, and threatening those who opposed his ideas. Thus was begun a process "by which that implicit faith which had been at once the foundation and the inspiration of Islam, which had nerved its warriors in their terrible warfare, and had brought the nation out of its former obscurity to the foremost position among the peoples of the world, was to be taken from them." From this time on, murder, dissimulation and intrigue reigned in the palace, anarchy and rebellion in the empire. The country was torn by the uprisings of religious sects, governors of provinces revolted and established independent principalities, robber chiefs fought their way to power and established themselves without hindrance, and continually the caliph became weaker, more and more of a figurehead, less and less able to right his government. Early in the ninth century, the caliph surrounded himself with a body guard of men taken prisoners in Turkestan. This guard gained power with ominous rapidity: a subsequent ruler admitted them to the privy council, still another increased their number to seventy thousand and their power proportionately. In a short time all power was in their hands; a descendant of the Saracens still sat on the throne of the caliphs, it is true, and this continued for a considerable time, but he was a mere puppet made or unmade at the will of his so-called servants. The rule of the Turk had come.

In view of the tremendous difference between this last period and

the spirit of the first believers, it may seem strange that the greatness of the Saracens could have endured even as it did. The heart of the empire had been dead long since to be sure, but for years the spirit of the early Saracens had continued to animate the frontiers, where each new conquest awakened new enthusiasm and frequently communicated itself to the conquered peoples. For the final downfall of Saracenic greatness, historians give four reasons: 1st, the division of the caliphate (during the reign of the Abassides in the East, the Ommiades set up their rival house in Spain, and still a third claimant, the Fatimites or descendants of Fatima, established themselves in Egypt); 2nd, the growth and dissensions of religious sects; 3rd, the withdrawal of remote provinces from the empire as a whole; 4th, the usurpation of power by the Turkish mercenaries. In these four elements we see the direct and external causes, but behind these what causes were at work? In viewing the history of Islam in its entirety, do we not become convinced, to a greater or less degree, of the truth of the following statement, made by Freeman: "A man, himself sincere and righteous, the greatest of reformers and benefactors to his own people, a preacher and legislator of truth and civilization, has eventually done more than any other mortal man to hinder the progress alike of truth and of civilization. The temporary and partial reform effected by Islam has proved the surest obstacle to a fuller and more permanent reform. A Mahometan nation accepts a certain amount of truth, receives a certain amount of civilization, practises a certain amount of toleration. But all these are so many obstacles to the acceptance of truth, civilization and toleration in their perfect shape." Admitting this statement to be true, we find at once a more vital reason for the check to Saracenic greatness. Accepting even partially the fact that a Moslem world-power would have been subversive to human progress, have we not the inner and real reason for its fall.

JULIA CHICKERING.

CORRESPONDENCE

[The Editors of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY believe the following correspondence will be of interest, as giving the point of view of a modern Mohammedan.]

LONDON, 27th August, 1915.

MADAM:

It was with greatly mixed feelings that I read your article in this month's THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY and it struck me as being a weird mixture of Truth and Ignorance not untinged with Egotism.

It was not until I was half way down the second page that I discovered to my surprise that you were against and not for Islam and when I turned back and reread the words "from the extreme of the Moslem writers to whom every tradition about their great Teacher is

sacred and is therefore to be accepted without question," etc., etc., and then reading further "his lack of genuinely spiritual qualities" . . . "numerous occasions on which vanity and self deception led to the distortion of his message . . ." I could not help feeling sorry that you should have been led to think so wrong about the great Prophet of Arabia (Peace and blessings be upon him).

As a true Moslem, and on behalf of my religion, I feel compelled to make a defence for Islam. I presume that hitherto you have read the Holy Koran as a Christian, with your mind already prejudiced against it, and, coming upon what you think to be faults (but which are really sentences distorted by yourself) you take them each as a weapon to strike against Islam, the whilst you belong to a Society whose aims are, I understand, to bring all religions together with the idea of searching after "Truth."

What, might I ask, do *you* consider as "genuinely spiritual qualities?" And might I also ask, do *you* consider the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom peace) as a lying, treacherous impostor, (Allah forbid)! or as a mad fanatic, or what? This is not sufficiently clear from the various conflicting points of your article. If the former, do you think it possible for any living man with such a terrible hypocrisy and deception weighing upon his soul to live the pure, holy, stainless life that He did? Do you think that it is or was possible for such a man to die the death that Muhammad (upon whom peace) did, calm, peaceful, and serene till the last? *No!* a thousand times No! Such a man would have writhed in a terrible agony of torment at having done such a thing, were it an imposture, especially after having thundered against the unbelievers the terrible torments of Hell. No, such a thing is utterly impossible. Nay, it is absurd.

And if the second, do you think that any madman could have controlled the fierce, intractable spirits of the wild Arabs with the firm unswerving power that he did? Do you think it possible for any madman to have lead the wild, savage, or, semi-savage tribes of the desert into battle with the cool courage and heroism that he did? No! such a thing is utterly impossible and ridiculous.

Again, do you think it was all mere human power that upheld the brave Arabs and their Holy Prophet through their trials and the tortures placed upon them by the *Christians, Jews* and the more barbarous heathens? Was it mere human power that helped the poor linen-clad ill-armed Arabs when they hurled themselves against the splendid, firmly-formed, well-armed and bronze-covered Legions of Cæsar? It must have been like the breakers upon a rock-bound shore, and yet they hurled themselves upon it, time after time until the mighty legions of the Romans were scattered like chaff. What power do you think it was that urged them on? Certainly no human power.

And again, do you think for one moment it would have been possible for a poor camel driver as Muhammad (on whom peace) was,

to have *invented* such a glorious book as Koran? The Koran, as you probably know, is and always has been, the standard work of the Orientals for eloquence and poetry. No man living has ever been able to compose any other work that can hold a candle to Koran. Why! *because Koran is not a human work.* Muhammad (on whom peace), was not the founder of Islam, Islam is the name for the religion of the Moslems, but it is also the name for the Jewish, Christian, and Moslem religions combined, Islam does not date from the year of the Hegira, but from the time of *Adam,* Islam has been the religion of the world since the creation, not since the time when the voice of the Prophet (on whom peace) was first heard in the desert. What struck me also was the words "borrowed no doubt from one of the Syrian sects" . . . Borrowed! Borrowed! how can that be when Allah is the one Deity of the universe?

In that case, looking at the subject from an atheistic point of view, Christ (on whom peace) borrowed the Christian religion from the old Testament, the Torah, and Moses (on whom peace) borrowed the Hebrew religion from the older Hebrews, who borrowed it from—whence?

Pardon me, but you are quite wrong, Islam, or call it Judaism if you like, was the religion from the Creation, either of the world, or of Adam, down to the time of Moses, and from thence till the time of Christ, then from that time down till the time of Muhammad and will be until Christ comes again, and after, when He sleeps beside Muhammad in the Sacred tomb at Mecca, on, on until the day of the Resurrection. Allah-u-Akbar.

Then, with regard to the words which Muhammad (on whom peace) spoke concerning the heathen Goddesses Allat and Allozza, (curses upon their names), doubtless all these idols which the heathens worship have some power, the power of the devils they represent, ambassadors of Satan, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (on whom peace) was after all only human, and might have been taken by these devils (curses upon them) unawares. That he did not fall into their power is fully shown by the words following, spoken by the Angel Gabriel, when, as you say, he upbraided the Prophet (on whom peace) for following other paths than the true one, even as Solomon "Went astray after false gods."

But the greatest surprise I received when I read the back of the book and found that the Theosophical Society is formed for the purpose of uniting all religions. Surely this is not the way to go about it, trying to find faults in each others religion; were I a member of the Society, I would be one not one day longer after having read your article. Although, pardon me for saying so, the way in which you argue shows that you fully understand your subject, and have read well thereupon, though I, for one, am together with many other Moslems, strongly against Muir for not having a better opinion of Islam than he had, especially after having studied the religion so deeply. Margoliouth,

also was recently exposed concerning a chapter in one of his books, the chapter was entitled "Islam as a secret Society," and a more childish work I never read. I think Irving is the best, or perhaps a book entitled *The Story of the Saracens* is the best. I forget the author.

I sincerely trust you will pardon me for writing to you, but I feel that on behalf of myself, my fellow Moslems and my religion, I could not pass a blow such as you have struck, you seem to be apologizing for Islam as though it was a bad egg, or something like that.

Trusting you will pardon me, and think somewhat better of Islam in the future, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

J. W. PEAECH.

MISS JULIA CHICKERING,
New York.

New York, Sept. 11, 1915.

DEAR SIR:

Your letter in regard to my article on Mahomet in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY was of very great interest to me,—the more so as I had not realized that what I had written could appear so unfavorable to Islam. I am by no means prejudiced against the faith as you think and was glad to have the subject presented from your point of view. At present I am reading the *History of the Saracens* (Ockley's, I suppose you meant) and shall get Irving's book on my return to New York.

In reading the QUARTERLY you evidently did not notice that the Society as a whole is not responsible for the opinions of any contributor to the magazine,—otherwise you would doubtless not have written, as you did, that you would not remain a member of the Society a day after reading my article. Articles in the QUARTERLY may quite frequently contain opinions contrary to those held by many members of the Society, but it is part of being a member to try to maintain a tolerant attitude toward the views and beliefs of others. For this reason the articles are given a hearing, with the fact in mind that they are by no means necessarily representative of Theosophy itself.

I have shown your letter to the editor of the QUARTERLY and he has requested me to ask your permission to publish it in the next number of the magazine, to be issued within the next few weeks. I hope you will give this permission, and will you let me know also whether or not you are willing to have your name used with it?

Yours very truly,

JULIA CHICKERING.

To J. W. PEAECH,
London.

25th Septr., 1915.

DEAR MADAM:

I am in receipt of your letter of the 11th inst, which I read with great interest; it showed that, as you say, you are certainly not so prejudiced against Islam as I first thought, and indeed, any Moslem would quite naturally have thought. Pardon me, but if this is so, why, may I ask, did you use the word "impostures"? That is a terrible word, one that should always be used with care and never without certainty to back it.

I willingly give you full permission to make whatever use you like both with my letter and my name. You may also, if you think fit, use this letter also. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to protect the Holy Prophet (on Whom peace) and His name to the best of my ability against any argument.

You are perfectly correct, I did not notice that the Society is not responsible for any opinions of any contributor to the Magazine. This considerably surprises me.

Seeing that you are not prejudiced against Islam, I cannot understand how you came to use that spiteful word "impostures" against the Prophet (on Whom peace); did you read what I said in my letter about His death? Think, when Death was drawing near and all the past rose up before Him as it always does with the dying, do you think He could have died with the calm fortitude that He did? Do you think that an impostor could, ere Death took him, raise himself upon his elbow with his last fast-failing strength, and cry in the faint, yet firm and confident voice of one who is sure: "Allah! My work is done, I come to Thee, Oh Allah"! and then fall back with a peaceful happy smile upon His lips and—Die?

I ask you, *Is* that *the death of an impostor?*

If you are a Christian (and I presume you are) you believe that Christ (on whom peace) died upon a cross at Calvary, and you also believe that he was the Son of God, and was sent to redeem the world, Why then was it that he cried (or the man upon the cross did) "My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me"?

Does that sound like the words of a Son calling to his Father? "Why hast thou forsaken me"? *Forsaken.* Even when I was a Christian I could not understand this, looking at it in the light of a Christian Truth, but now, looking at it from a Moslem point of view, it is by far the more incomprehensible. It is an open insult and a reproach to Almighty God. And you say that Christ was sent to redeem the world, he must have known his ultimate end long before it arrived, and yet you say that he reproached his "Father" when it did arrive! I presume you are acquainted with the Moslem view of the Crucifixion. How the likeness of another man was placed upon Christ and vice versa, and how the man was crucified in the *place* of

Christ. That also explains the curious conduct of Judas, casting the silver talents at the feet of the Judges and saying that it was the price of the blood of an innocent man, so it would be, Christ was accused of being a defamer, etc., and was therefore guilty in the eyes of the Jews; but the man was not, Judas discovered the mistake and declared that it was the price of the blood of an innocent man. So it was. That also explains the words of Christ (or rather the mistaken man) before Pilate when he was asked if he was the Son of God. As you know the answer was "Thou sayest." So he did. The man accused of so being did not admit and he did not deny. Do you think that if it was really Christ (on whom peace) he would have answered so; do you not think that he would have admitted it and began preaching. He would have had a sufficiently needy audience.

Islam is a religion that can adapt itself to all races, classes and localities. It is free and open-minded. Moslems have been accused of being an arrogant, proud people, and their religion a religion of the Sword. The former is false with regard to the *True* Moslems. For does not the Koran say:—"Whoever is humble for Allah's sake may exalt his eminence," and "Mankind are all the sons of Adam, and he was from dust." With regard to the latter it is not altogether untrue; only you must take into consideration the great necessity for the use of cold steel. Does not the Koran instruct Moslems not to attack; but, if attacked, fight; and not only to fight, but to follow it up; and the first Moslems, being the fierce warlike Arabs of the Desert, quite naturally did not hesitate to carry this out to the full. Mohammed (on whom peace) finding not only his own life, but the lives of his brave followers in danger, was compelled to take to the sword. But, did he not say to the great Meccan host before the walls of Medina, "Verily, if the sword of Islam is unsheathed, never, until my purpose is accomplished, shall it be again sheathed"; and well the sinful world has known it.

Do you not think that the world at that time needed something higher, purer, and better than the corrupted Christianity and Idolatry of the period? Those calling themselves Christians then worshipped God, Christ, Mary, Peter, Paul and many of the other saints, and those who were not Christians were either a kind of Paganistic-Jews or pure —or rather impure—idolaters and heathens. Do you not think that Islam came as a blessing upon the world at that time and ever since? Do you not think that Islam came as a gleaming light of Hope and Salvation in the dark evil days of pagan Arabia, the days of tyranny and strife? Terrible reports come down to us of those far off days amid which Mohammed (on whom peace) was born and grew up in the pure, stainless life he did. Brothers, Sisters and Children were killed with impunity, or sold into slavery; drunkenness and vice were rampant; some few records—which seem incredible, and I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement—tell how even Mothers were taken to wife and Fathers married even their own daughters! Murder and

theft were the common things of the day and what little law and order there was did not even attempt to stay this, or even hold it in check. Do you not think then that the world has benefited by the coming of the Holy Prophet (on whom peace); coming amidst all this Vice, Sin and Strife, and struggling for Mastery; at last sweeping it all aside and trampling it all underfoot; founding the mighty Empire of the Saracens, a nation of purity and freedom? And yet you call him an "impostor."

More than once I have had the question put to me "Look at what Christianity has done for us, built up this vast Empire, is this not enough proof of the truth of Christianity?"

I answer, "No," decidedly, "No." An Empire such as England, America, France, or any of the other great Empires of the world could have been built up just as well upon Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, or any other sensible religion. A religion does not make an earthly Empire. Who, then, I ask, built up ancient Egypt. Did Ammon, the King of the Gods of the Egyptians, build up the Empire? Did Ra, Osiris, Horus, Set, Menthu, or any of the two thousand odd gods or goddesses build it? (Personally I think that beneath the grotesque cloak of idolatry of the Egyptians there was hidden the truth of the One God, but that is not the subject). Who built up Babylon? Did Nimrod? Did Baal? Did Astarte, or Astoreth? Or any other of the infamous deities of this people build up the vast Empire of Babylon? Who built up Assyria? that fierce race of warriors who came from the Babylonians? Who built up Rome, Greece, Phœnicia, Carthage? Could not England have been raised up out of the sea in the same manner as these dead nations have been raised up? Could not France, etc., etc., etc.?

Did not God say:—"Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my words shall remain?"

I have written at some length, and, I fear, taken up a great deal of your time; not however, I hope in vain; and, if you have not already consigned this letter to the flames, I trust you will pardon me for writing so fully, but you can readily understand how your article stung me. Who, since I became a convert to Islam some years ago, have learned to love and reverence, with a love that only Moslems can feel, the Holy, Pure, Noble-minded, and High-souled Prophet of Arabia, Mahommed (Peace and blessings be forever upon His name) the Saviour of the World. The Prophet who, knowing what it was to be the faithful husband, the loving father, and the resolute General, stepped forth amid the whirl of Darkness, Sin, and Strife, and, with firm step and undaunted courage, thundered against the Sinners the tidings of the Vengeance of Almighty God; exhorting them with fiery words to come unto the Light of Islam. The Prophet whose divine words shattered the Idols in the Kaaba, and softened the flinty hearts of the wild, untamed, desert rangers. The mighty General whose ill-armed warriors flung back the united power of Rome and Palestine, and swept

on to Victory thundering forth the Moslem hymn of Triumph, that has echoed down the arched domes of the ages, the glorious song of Victory that has lead the Moslems into battle and to Death and through Death unto Life, aye, and shall echo round the world from pole to pole until:— "the stars shall be scattered and the earth shall be cleft asunder," from everlasting unto everlasting.

I should esteem it a honour if you will let me have your opinion on the books and also on Islam in general.

Trusting you will think better of Islam in future, I remain, awaiting your reply, Yours very sincerely,

Miss Julia Chickering, J. W. Peaech.
New York.

P. S.—Perhaps soon I shall be able to let you have some copies of the *Islamic Review*, but I understand owing to the war it is not permitted that any periodical be sent out. J. W. P.

November 25, 1915.

To the Editor.

Sir:—

As I read these letters over, there seems to be little need for comment on my part. On receiving them I was considerably surprised to learn that my article was regarded as so strongly inimical to Mahomet. I had felt no such prejudice as is ascribed to me but had rather felt deep admiration for the many truly great qualities which his life exhibits. The writer says it is not sufficiently clear from the various conflicting points of my article, whether I consider Mahomet "as a lying treacherous impostor or as a mad fanatic." As I was endeavoring, not to convert others to my way of thinking, but merely to present facts, I had not considered it necessary to make clear my personal opinion of so great a man. As a conservative, reasonable and, (from a Christian point of view) unbiased expression of opinion on this point, however, I should accept that of E. A. Freeman, in his *History and Conquests of the Saracens:*

"In everything we see at once how great was the immediate reform effected by Mahomet in his own land, and how utterly inadequate his system was to effect a permanent reform in other lands. The master of such immediate scholars" (the first Saracens) "could not have been the 'wicked impostor' depicted by Dean Prideaux; but the author of such ultimate results must surely have mistaken his calling when he announced himself as the Prophet of the whole world."

Yours truly,

Julia Chickering.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

IV

IT is evident from that which has preceded that Paul had himself a very clear idea of what the Spirit in man was, what it meant as a "fact of supernature," and what new and personal responsibilities its possession involved. Further, this conception was so fundamental to everything that Paul believed and taught, and was so knit into the texture of his daily thought and life, that it occupies *the* pre-eminent place in his doctrines, whether these be ethical, or purely spiritual, in character.

Once this idea is fully grasped the whole of Paul's discipline reveals itself as united about one main endeavour:—to bring to realization in the consciousness of his disciples the new life awaiting them in the Spirit, together with an understanding of the laws that govern its existence. Baptism, with the laying on of hands and accompanied frequently by the occurrence of genuinely spiritual and not merely psychic phenomena, marked the birth into the new life. The virtues of this genesis to the disciple's own consciousness was the Spirit itself, the gift of the Master Christ. By and through it he *"knew,"* he "discerned spiritual things," he became aware of the presence of the Master Himself.

Because of its setting in the *New Testament,* and because of the traditional mould into which our thought is so often directed by habit, this experience, common in St. Paul's day, is regarded more as historically interesting than as a current fact in the upward path of the soul. It is true that St. Paul's circle was relatively very small when the world's population is considered, and that therefore these people to whom he was writing were to a certain degree in advance of their generation in that they were capable of any response at all to his appeal. But too much can be made of this argument, because it supplies a ready excuse for our present-day lack of virility and for an inertia that selfishly considers every step before venturing the unknown. The fact remains that Paul's disciples were sinners and often crude sinners; so that comparison shows that it only rests with us how much power the Master can use both to establish us on the disciple's path, and to reveal those "mysteries of the kingdom" about which Paul is hinting.

Moreover, judging by effects, the experience of these early Christians is by no means unknown throughout the Christian era, and even right up to our own day. Lives of the saints, however discredited by those who have not studied them, contain autobiographical material that resemble these *New Testament* experiences to a remarkable extent; and well-known books such as James' *Varieties of Religious Experience,*

or Harold Begbie's *Twice-Born Men,* or any of the rescue mission Reports, contain a mass of testimony to the reality of the Spirit in men, and to the immediate power of Christ. So that no longer do the links connecting us with the past seem so lacking as at first sight they appear to be, and as our traditional attitude toward *New Testament* events leads us unthinkingly to maintain.

So far, then, St. Paul in his teaching of the Spirit has not outstripped to any great degree the actual experience of many whose lives are more or less at one with our own. His vision of the Spirit is more precise than ours; he emphasises certain features that are not the common property of every religious man; and religious experiences that to us have had no special meaning, he designates as specific evidence of the Spirit in us. When, however, in *I. Corinthians,* xii, he takes up the subject of "spiritual gifts," we approach a new and higher conception of the function of the Spirit in us, and one having great significance because throwing light on Paul's own conception of the Church as a spiritual fact. This in turn links itself with what was said in the July QUARTERLY about the future possibilities of a trained and united human will; the attainment of which, it was suggested, was the perfectly explicit object of all religious teaching.

Undoubtedly the physical contact of man with man has taught him to be a social creature; he has learned to unite against a common enemy, to enforce a minimum standard of moral conduct, and to relinquish a few personal desires for the good of the whole. But the essence of the social contract is a compromise between selfishness and the fear of consequences; there is the barest existence of anything that may properly be called selflessness. As a man raises himself above this world-standard by the development of a pure love that will off-set his animal self-love, he escapes from the self-centeredness of his personal existence, and begins really to enter into and share the life of his fellow-man. Friendship, true marriage, the parental ties, are first steps in the new direction; and the essence of these experiences is no longer governed by the rational and selfish judgments of the mind, but is a free expression of all that is best and most altruistic in each individual human heart. The advantages, often mutual, of physical relationships; the interests of the material personality; all those human activities which pertain to the animal nature and to our lower desires, emotions, and impulses—these things are of a different order from that inner life or force or will which is called love, and is of the Spirit. For it is this love or spiritual energy which lies at the bottom of friendship, marriage, or whole-hearted devotion to any cause, and which makes them what they are.

The simple tendency of human evolution, therefore, may be expressed in terms of degrees of love. First self-love; then unselfishness,—that degree where self is deliberately renounced for the sake of another; and finally that degree of selflessness where there is no longer any restrictions from selfish or self-pointed desires, and where it may be said that

the will or service of one's fellow-man becomes the sole motive for action. When this stage is reached a new order of consciousness is entered upon, new powers appear, and life is lived with consciousness of the whole at its center, rather than with that of the fragmentary individual personality.

At present mankind is a mixture of all three stages; no one of us is wholly free from selfish, animal desires; and few indeed have any consciousness at all of the highest degree.

But St. Paul, following the example of his Master, lived just such a life of selflessness, and that, too, in the face of specially critical and trying circumstances. His teaching conforms to the motive of his life. And the point of interest for us lies in the fact that these simple and understandable human qualities of our practical, daily living, when synthesized and brought under the immediate influence of Christ, become elements of this new spiritual order. Here we begin to discern the connection between our familiar material and psychic worlds, and that world of spirit which we are told is so near, and which seems so remote and undiscoverable.

If life, moreover, be not only an evolution, but an exfoliation of spiritual force as well, the steps in the evolutionary process must in some way express the tendency of the spiritual impulse behind them. And if, as was outlined in the earlier parts of this article, a double evolutionary task confronts the free-will of humanity, we should expect to find St. Paul's vision, and his special efforts with more advanced disciples, directed toward a comprehension of, and preparation for, this twofold achievement. For with every advance along the great pathway of life, the leaders and pioneers would be expected to find vital and personal for themselves those larger problems which do not as yet effect the majority of mankind.

Turning for confirmation of this to St. Paul, we find that his whole endeavour seems to be to make us feel not only the nearness and reality of the spiritual world, but to make us feel it in terms most familiar to us by extracting out of our daily consciousness those elements that are of the Spirit, and then building upon these. So that even if we look from below up, we can gain the assurance that at least there *is* a world of Spirit. If we can see in terms of evolution that the individual perfection is measured by will, and that the perfection of the race depends upon the capacity for co-operation of each individual with the will of the whole, we at once find a point of contact with St. Paul's conception of charity or love as the great acting-power of the Christian life. So also his Church becomes the outer representation of an inner fact, the fact of a spiritual oneness of mind, heart, and will in Christ; just as in evolutionary psychology we can speak of a national spirit, the united consciousness of members of one nation.

But Paul goes much beyond this. Once having established the reality of a world of will, of love, of Spirit, he proceeds to tell us about

this world. He shows us by analogies with our mental and psychic worlds; by pointing out the effects of Spirit when it is born in us; and by direct teaching, as far as we are able to understand it. Those qualities in us which we recognize as highest, he shows to exist not feebly as with us, but as magnificent powers and capacities. Will and love, self-control and selflessness, these are not only ties that bind us to the spiritual world; they become after the new birth the mainspring of our lives. They are the substance of spiritual existence. And the lives of his disciples, lived consciously on this plane, and knit together in one fellowship, drawing on the spiritual flood of Christ's power, formed the Church, the "body of Christ." The Church, then, in this conception, far from being the man-made organization familiar to us in history, becomes instead the actual life of the Spirit in the world.

To these two achievements—that of the individual and that of the Church—Paul devotes all his writings, all his teaching, all his life and example; and it is with these that we have to deal in our effort to interpret the remainder of his works.

V

Perhaps the most noticeable, because the most striking, effect of the new birth and the accomplished possession of a Spirit in the disciple, was his power to perform "miracles." In the natural order this first struck outsiders with wonderment; and it seems also that those beholding such powers in themselves mistrusted or did not fully understand them. In chapter XII of *I. Corinthians* Paul takes up this subject. "Now concerning the things of the Spirit, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." We have not translated *περὶ τῶν πνευματικῶν* "spiritual gifts," as is done in both Versions, because it seems that Paul is treating not only of *χαρισμάτα*, that is, powers to perform miracles through the operations of divine grace, but rather of the diverse activities of the Spirit in man on all planes and in all ways. We must remember that Paul is teaching disciples, men who already possess phenomenal powers, whose instruction has passed beyond the simple and literal early stages; and we must be on our guard against limiting this instruction to the merely phenomenal side, forgetting that back of all expressions of spiritual power is the life of the Spirit itself. So, then, taking up the things of the Spirit, Paul says, "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say, Jesus is Master, but in the Holy Spirit." Manifestly this must apply to something more than a superficial lip-service; and Paul must be referring to a spiritual perception and knowledge of Christ. Not until the chela has advanced far on the Path can he say *of his own knowledge* that Jesus is Master. And such an one who *has* attained so far cannot speak ill of the Master and remain a disciple.

"Now there are diversities of gifts (*χαρισμάτων*), but the same Spirit." Here the key-note is again struck. We are dealing with the background of the Christian life. "Diversities of gifts—diversities of ministrations—diversities of workings"—but behind all, within all, is the Father, perceived by and through His supreme gift of a Spirit, essentially one and inseparable from His creations. "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal." There follows a list of gifts, given, not as we might say, *from* or *by* the Spirit, but *through* the Spirit, that Spirit in each established disciple:—the gifts themselves coming from the Father. These gifts include "the word of wisdom," knowledge, faith, "gifts of healing," prophecy, "workings of miracles" (powers), discerning Spirits, and "*divers kinds* of tongues," as it is translated. All but this last gift are fairly well recognized as universal faculties of the Spirit; the final one has been a source of controversy from the early Church Fathers to the present day. And the reason seems to be quite simply that all the commentators knew so little of the realities of the Spirit as to miss the hint contained in the text; the issue being further befogged by mistranslation and unenlightened copyings of the texts.

The words supplied in both Versions, i. e., "*divers kinds*" of tongues, have no parallel in the Greek, and are inserted to make the passage conform more closely to Acts II, 4ff., which passage Madame Blavatsky tells us has been so far tampered with, added to, and falsified as to be practically beyond reconstruction. In *I. Corinthians* the Greek reads *ἑρμηνεία γλοσσῶν*, which means "interpretative tongues," or "interpreting tongues." Plato uses the very word *ἑρμηνεία* in a strikingly similar connection in Bk. VII, Chap. VII, Section 524B of the *Republic*, where he is discussing the "interpretations which the soul receives" of the *ideas* of hard and soft, light and heavy. In St. Paul we have a reversal in that it is the Spirit in the disciples which interprets the mysteries to other lesser disciples and even to outsiders. Every great poet, every mystic, every religious teacher has been endowed with this interpretative gift, without which their teaching is lost in abstruse metaphysics or obscure symbolism. It is the ability both to discern another's need and then to "speak to his condition," as Fox put it. We are also reminded of the third aphorism of *Light on the Path:* "Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound." If we again remember that Paul is writing to disciples and is speaking of and to the Spirit in each one of them, it will be less difficult to believe that these several gifts are no impossible achievement.

Paul now turns to that new spiritual effort and outgrowth of accomplished discipleship, the Church. The Church is the link, or first step, that leads us from our isolation as individuals to the body-corporate of disciples. Above the Church, above the disciples, stand the Master and the Lodge; and there can be no reasonable objection, since Paul was himself an Initiate, to seeing in the early Church the most direct

thoroughfare from the world to the Lodge. Certainly Paul gives us every evidence for believing this. So that the Church, regarded in its primitive, that is to say, Pauline sense, becomes not a man-made, man-directed organization pointed heavenward, but rather a Lodge instrument thrust down into the world, with Christ at its head; and properly governed by initiates and disciples. The sequence of Paul's thought, and the fact, which so often escapes us in reading him, that he is really speaking to *disciples,* will prove that this is so.

Putting together Paul's testimony on this point, we find him saying: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." This is the spiritual Christ, the Master, standing at the focus whither ascend all those "chains" spoken of in Letter XII in the *Letters That Have Helped Me.* "For in *one* Spirit were we all baptized into *one body,* whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit," (compare the symbolic rite of drinking the Soma juice in the Hindu initiations). The italics are mine; they emphasize this aspect of unity brought out by Paul as the characteristic of this new spiritual relation of the disciples. There follows a closely reasoned analogy between the physical body, with its separate parts and functions, and this corporate spiritual body. The passage closes with the sentences—"Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof [or members each in his part]. And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then powers [moral or spiritual], then gifts of healings, ministers to the sick, administrators, divers kinds of tongues." But, Paul asks, are these signs of the Spirit essential? Are all in the Church endowed with gifts such as these? "Rather desire earnestly the greater gifts. And a still more excellent way show I unto you."

What follows is perhaps the high-watermark of Paul's utterance. Its significance for us lies in two directions. On the one hand Paul has brought will and love, volition and the highest feeling, together. He has shown that actions without right motive have no more immortality than a noise; and that mere existence, the bare living of life, does not profit anything in the scale of spiritual values and realities. Will, and all the forces in us of desire and instinct that are governed by the will, must be brought under the control of love. On the other hand Paul is teaching a group of Christian disciples; charity or love is the "greater gift" compared with "the gift of prophecy," or possession of "all mysteries and all knowledge" and "all faith"; so that charity or love must be the key-note of the Spirit of the Church.

This ideal of charity as the mainspring of action is, like the Sermon on the Mount, addressed to disciples; and, therefore, while having value as an ideal for all men, is to be taken as a practical, immediate factor in the disciple's life and consciousness. Indeed the life of the disciple as

a disciple and not merely as a man in and of the world, is seen to depend on how clearly and repeatedly this ideal actually does enter into his daily thoughts and actions. So also with the Church, the body of Christ, a spiritual body of a spiritual Master. Love is its fundamental principle: without love between members the Church would cease to exist, whatever outer organization might remain among the minds and bodies of its former members.

These two chapters of *I. Corinthians,* the thirteenth and fourteenth, are so packed full of suggestions that only a few can be selected for special comment. But once this idea of the spiritual import of Paul's words be fully grasped, once the Church is identified in our minds not with ritual or with creed, but rather with Christ, the Master, a living reality of the spiritual world, then much that is obscure, or that seems beyond our present knowledge, can be related and in part at least, appreciated. Thus we get a hint in the long discussion about the relative value of speaking in a tongue and of prophesying. Paul says of tongues: "For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man heareth; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. . . . He that speaketh in a tongue buildeth up himself. . . . But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching? . . . So also ye, unless ye utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking in air. . . . For if I pray in a tongue, my Spirit prayeth, but my mind is unfruitful. What is it, then? I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the mind also: I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the mind also. Else if thou bless with the Spirit, how shall he that filleth the place of the unlearned say the Amen at the giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" Surely the relation of this with what has gone before—with the saying, "Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned,"—and with this whole conception of a spiritual order, transcending mind, which is open only to those brought to birth as a Spirit in this world;—surely this can now be seen to bear directly on the life and functions proper to Spirit.

The same passage, scrutinized from another angle, yields another point worthy of notice. Prophesying is of all the gifts the one singled out by Paul as most to be desired and sought. The reason is simple: the gift of tongues "buildeth up" the disciple himself; "but he that prophesieth buildeth up the Church. Now I would have you all speak with tongues"—that is, Paul would have each individual attain—"but *more* that ye should prophesy; and greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, unless he interpret, that the Church may receive edifying,"—that is, the disciple must consider more the needs of the Church, of his fellow-disciples, than his own development, thereby

giving practical application to the principle of love. We are reminded that the Master Himself came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and that He said, "whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mk. X, 44, 45.) And so Paul himself,—"I thank God I speak with tongues more than you all: howbeit in the Church I had rather speak five words with my mind, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue."

Perhaps the putting of a few of these passages together, and in the setting that seems properly to belong to them, has showed Paul's teaching to us not, on the one hand, as something divorced utterly from the natural development of man's consciousness in the evolutionary process, nor, on the other, as entirely beyond the capacities of our everyday knowledge and experience. If the spiritual world be anything, it must be a synthesis of all that we see as separate and often uncorrelated in the lower worlds of mind and matter. To approach from below requires the treading of innumerable mental paths, else the mind is not satisfied. But if once we can see by any one approach that there is a synthesis possible, and that the spiritual world does exist, we can then turn around and, by working from the center outward, see how all the outer circumference is connected by radii with the center.

In Paul we find both methods. His earlier exhortations and appeals build up arguments and testimony to establish the fact of the spiritual world. Then he tells us of birth and growth in this world, the birth and growth of a Spirit in each one of us. Finally, he reveals to us the Church, coterminous with the birth of Spirit in us, because with this birth we became an integral part of the body of Christ. And his teaching is now directed toward an elucidation of the life, activities, and function essential to the Church, and to the disciples as members of the Church, all united as one in the "mystical body" of the Master.

The relation of Paul's further teachings with Christ's own words on this subject, together with some commentaries in Theosophical literature upon them, will have to be left to another section.

JOHN BLAKE, JR.

(*To be continued.*)

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

"THE war takes precedence," said the Recorder, wishing to avoid preliminaries. "You agree with me, do you not?" turning to the Philosopher.

"Certainly I do," the latter replied. "The war is still serving as the Great Sifter. It has come 'that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.' Every one of us is tested daily as we act and react because of it. The opinion and feeling of the humblest among us is important, not only for each one's own sake, but as a world factor. 'Thoughts are things.' Clear-cut thinking affects and consolidates the vague cogitations of a nation. And when that clear-cut thinking is right thinking, which means when it is in harmony with the thinking of Masters, it amounts to an externalization, at least on the plane of thought, of the spiritual world, of the 'Kingdom,' and therefore has unlimited power back of it. No member of the Society, it seems to me, should for one moment allow himself to forget this. He is just as responsible for his thoughts as for his deeds, and he should strive earnestly and constantly to think rightly about matters which, though they may not seem to concern him personally, must on the face of it be of vital interest to the Masters. The future of the race is being fought out objectively."

"Would it not be well to remind ourselves more frequently," asked the Disciple, "that the test of our love for Masters and for their Movement is the extent to which we make their interests our own? Is not that always the supreme test of love, of sympathy? We cease to care for things or aims unless we can share them with those whom we love, while their interests, perhaps at first quite foreign to us, we adopt automatically as our own as soon as we hear of them.

"But besides right thinking about the war and its causes, and the questions of ethics and honour and principle which it ceaselessly raises, let us also draw as many lessons from it as we can of a practical and personal kind. The war, after all, is merely a manifestation, on a large scale, of the eternal struggle between good and evil taking place within ourselves. Let us note, for instance, the advantage Germany has gained by taking and keeping the initiative. It is what the powers of evil always try to do against us; but it is our own fault if we let them. The Allies ought to have taken the initiative in the Balkans. They did not. We ought always to take the initiative against the evil, the sin, the weaknesses that threaten us. We should strike and should strike hard on the side of right, by proper mortification of our appetites, and by deliberate, methodical efforts to exercise the virtues of which our faults and failings are the perversions, the deflections. To conquer self, we must deny self; and there is no better way to deny self than to make it

say a kindly word when it does not want to; or to make it write a letter when it wants to read a newspaper; or to make it get out of bed when it wants 'just five minutes more' of dozing. Method, system, are essential to success. But the point is that without over-taxing our strength, we should take the aggressive and should keep it. Otherwise we risk surprise; we enable the enemy to attack us at our most vulnerable point; we fight on ground of his, instead of our own choice."

"What a warning for all of us also," said the Philosopher, "in the misconduct of such politicians as Carson and Churchill in England. They did not mean to be disloyal. They may have been right in many of their criticisms of the Government they were leaving. But right or wrong, their avowed motive in speaking as they did was *self-justification.* What a motive! The result of course was to weaken their own cause and to encourage the enemy. They risked that—and it is impossible to acquit them of running that risk knowingly—they risked that because they put self before their Cause. Oh yes,—I know that Churchill at once went to the front and that, theoretically at least, he now risks his life. But this merely means that he values his life less than he values the good opinion of his fellows. He has not surrendered *all* to his Cause. He has surrendered part, and only part. The question is,—are we doing likewise? What are we holding back, unsurrendered, while we flatter ourselves that we are devoted heart and soul to the work of Masters in the world?

"It is true that the world itself did not condemn those two men for their self-assertion. The New York *Times* remarked: 'It will be said, of course, that a patriot in civil life should bear the loss of reputation as heroically as the patriot in the field of battle faces death, and that Mr. Churchill, in defending himself by blaming others, may have increased the difficulties of the Government by shaking the public confidence in some of its leaders. *But this is to take a very lofty view of human nature, to judge the retiring minister by the altruistic ideal.*'

"From one of the best of the New York papers, such a comment shows how low our own political standards are. The ideal I have suggested, obviously cannot be described as 'altruistic.' It is by no means so exalted. The question is one of honour, of self-respect, of loyalty. Nor does my opinion hinge on some lofty view of human nature. I would grant that there exists in everyone of us a tendency to justify ourselves on the slightest provocation. But that is not the point. The question is, what are we going to do with our tendency? Satisfy it, or deny it? Feed self or sacrifice it? Which would we prefer to do? We might prove utterly unworthy of our own ideals if tempted as Churchill was tempted; but for Heaven's sake do not let us lower our ideals because of our self-distrust. Let us use our fear as an incentive to greater effort. Let us recognize the ideal all the more clearly by reason of that other's failure. We dare not condemn the man; we know we cannot judge him. But we can and must condemn his action."

"Yes," mused the Student; "it is not merely that we have to think of this life, and of how we should like to act in an emergency as loyal members of the T. S. There is the next life also to be considered. Suppose we were reborn in a nation which it were possible to love whole-heartedly, and that we were to occupy prominent and responsible positions in its Government or in its army; how dreadful it would be if self were to blind us to honour, to patriotism, to duty! Truly it is wise to take time by the forelock and to sharpen one's perceptions now, so that ideals and obligations may be stamped indelibly on our hearts and wills for ever."

"Do you aspire to rank and responsibility?" asked the Objector.

"You expect me, perhaps, to say No," the Student answered. "But I could not truthfully say No. As I am today, my ideal is to feel responsible for every word I say, for every thought I think, for every expression of my face or of my eyes, for every movement I make. I do not see that rank or position makes any difference, except that rank may give greater opportunity for service."

"Well," remarked the Philosopher, "if you are ticketed for high position, I do not envy you. But I suggest you take your own medicine and learn what you can from present plentiful and awful warnings of how not to do it!"

"It is curious," the Student replied. "There is England, trying to run the war by committee of the whole: a debating society, trying, by analogy, to captain a football team during a championship game! Then there are the pro-Ally newspapers in this country insisting that the struggle is between democratic and autocratic principles, while the success of France has been made possible by the voluntary surrender of democratic principles and the adoption of methods as nearly as possible autocratic!"

"But that is not all," said the Philosopher. "If it comes to lessons in leadership, beware of following when you are supposed to lead; beware of deluding yourself with the idea that your first duty is to be the servant of the national will. The nation will not thank you in the end. It will despise you.

"A nation is like an individual. This country, in particular, loves its comfort; it is slow to respond to higher motives, and when honour calls it away from comfort, it often grumbles and, for a time, even turns a deaf ear to the appeal. None the less, if a woman—a wife or mother—in similar circumstances supports the lower instead of the higher impulses in a man, while he may be grateful at the moment, he will resent it later and will blame her for his own failure. In other words, as between a man and a woman, the woman can keep her hold on the man's allegiance only at the price of encouraging the best of which he is capable. If she does otherwise, in the end she will lose him.

"Exactly the same law governs the relations of a choir and a choirmaster; a baseball team and its trainer; of any group and its leader.

You must expect and demand the best or the group will desert you; you must interpret that group, or nation, to itself, in terms of its higher capabilities, ignoring its sloath and insisting upon the reality and vitality of its submerged ideals: otherwise, long before your failure breaks through into the understanding of your 'followers,' they will instinctively feel you to be a fraud, and for leadership will turn elsewhere. Even if, at this juncture, you try to recover the ground you have lost by responding to and following the better impulses which have come to the fore in your people, though you may pacify them for a time, they will shelve you at the second if not at the first opportunity."

"Why is that, do you suppose?" asked the Visitor.

"Is it not because the soul is more real than the lower nature, than the animal self? But my answer suggests the need to qualify what I said before, because that was based upon the supposition that the individual or the nation will react from its own baser tendencies. There are cases, of course, in which the compliance of the woman or of the leader results in the prolonged degradation of those whom they should inspire."

"Do you expect, then, that this country will revolt from its present leaders?" the Visitor inquired.

"I do," answered the Philosopher, "unless they have the courage to admit their earlier mistakes. The conscience of the nation is stirring. We are beginning to see that our conduct has been weak, timid—even cowardly. We have been actuated by fear of discomfort, and no good thing ever came out of fear. You cannot fool all of the people all the time, and the people know that the judgment of the whole world is unlikely to be radically wrong. Now the whole world despises this country, for one reason or another, with all its soul: in any case it despises our Government. The actions and the utterances of many citizens, in flagrant opposition to the attitude and recommendations of our Government, have done much to mitigate the severity of the world's contempt. The work, for instance, of the American Ambulance in France: that has done wonders, because Americans daily have risked their lives for justice, for honour, for love of all that France fights for."

"Do you not think that our large gifts of money must have impressed Europe with our sympathy, and in that sense have counteracted the impression of selfish aloofness, of willingness to profit by the other man's misfortune, which our Government has created?"

"No," answered the Philosopher, "I do not think so. We have tried to salve our conscience by means of money,—again placing money first. But just because Europe has not placed money first, she sees through our motive, as you or I see through the motive of the rich man who sends a cheque to the United Charities in order to feel comfortable when rejecting personal appeals. What would you say of a man who, having been party to a murder, makes a large donation to some Church in the hope of bribing God! God is not mocked. Neither is Europe deceived."

"You spoke a moment or two ago of Americans risking their lives for love of all that France fights for. It seems to me that France is fighting for herself, and in that sense is doing exactly what we have done." This was from the Objector.

"I should like to answer that," said the Gael, whose silence recently has been noticeable. "I can tell you for what France is fighting. She is fighting for the world's immortal beauty; for the love of women and for the souls of little children and the sacredness of homes. She is fighting for the invisible against naked horror; against the yells of murderers that she may hear the footsteps of Christ along her lanes and round her altars. She is fighting for the fruits of the spirit—for love and joy and peace and gentleness, for purity and for all things noble—against rapine and treachery and cold-blooded egotism and brutal bullying and all the other fruits of hell. She is fighting for the world's hopes and for human brotherhood and for the loveliness of the heart of God. And she knows why she fights—she and all her children, so that when they die they die in ecstasy, the angels, who cannot die, envying them their lot.

"That is why France fights. Is that why we refrain! And yet, deep in our hearts, in spite of selfishness and the grip of material comfort, we feel a divine nostalgia for heroism. Some day we may hear that Master's passionate cry—'Debout les morts!'—and, hearing, we, even we, may respond!"

"You had better explain your quotation," suggested the Recorder.

"Oh, you mean that story from the trenches? It was illustrated in the French and English weeklies. A company of French soldiers had been ordered to hold a trench to the last. Everyone of them had been killed or wounded. They were lying in heaps at the bottom of the trench. Suddenly one of them was wounded again. The pain of his new wound roused him. He opened his eyes to see that the enemy were on them. Grasping his musket he sprang to his feet and, lifted by his fervour into Paradise, he cried with a loud voice, 'Debout les morts!' —Arise ye dead! Those dying men heard him—Nay, they heard the Voice which his voice-echoed. Galvanized into momentary and superhuman life, they hurled themselves at the enemy, driving them back and finally saving the day. This done, those men, with one exception, dropped where they stood, stone dead."

"It may interest you to know," said the Historian, "that the survivor was interviewed by Maurice Barrès, who tells the whole story in much greater detail in the *Echo de Paris* of November 18th. As a variety of religious experience, it will take lasting rank among the most remarkable."

"As I understand it, your idea is," said the Visitor addressing the Gael, "that the French soldier echoed an appeal that is being made to all of us, and that his ear caught it as his fervour lifted his consciousness and his senses to some inner, spiritual plane. But do you suggest that

the spiritual powers are urging us to join in this war? Would that be the meaning, for us, of 'Debout les morts'?"

"An appeal to the highest and best in each of us," answered the Gael. "An appeal to forget our narrower, selfish interests, and to give whatever we have or are to the cause for which the spiritual powers fight. The outer is only a reflection of the inner warfare. Yet, so far as our limitations permit, whether as a nation or as individuals, we should do what we can on all planes, and with the weapons adapted for use on each plane, to overcome, with good, the unblushing evil let loose upon the world."

"The trouble is," commented the Student, "that the large majority of people in this country, and I suspect in England too, still fail to realize the extent of that evil. Things already done have been bad enough. But it is the principle even more than the things done which needs to be exposed and execrated. That principle is: Stop at nothing in order to win. Worse than that, in a most carefully censored press, newspaper writers, without rebuke, declare in the name of God and of humanity that that principle should govern. Not long ago, for instance, an article by Dr. Heinz Pothoff, leader of the Progressive party in the Rhine Province, was published in the *Deutsche Kriegschriften,* in which the author said: 'If Germany should ever be brought to the verge of actual starvation, it is certain that the General Staff will do anything rather than allow the victorious German armies to be called home from France, Russia and Belgium owing to the lack of food . . . If necessary, *we must kill hundreds of thousands of prisoners now consuming our supplies.* It would be frightful, but it is inevitable if there is no other way of holding out' (quoted in *The Evening Sun* of December 1st, 1915).

" 'Why not eat them too!' was the comment of one American writer. And the fact that he joked about it proves that he did not take the threat seriously. None the less, that threat, and even the joking inference from it, are the logical outcome of the principles which now govern Germany as a nation. We must make every allowance for exceptional individuals; even for many exceptions: but until the people repudiate their Government; until they revolt against this monstrous and hellish doctrine that the end justifies the means, they must be regarded as the enemies of God and the enemies of mankind."

"How do you reconcile that statement with your belief in universal brotherhood?" asked the Objector.

"I find in it, not a contradiction of brotherhood, but an overwhelming proof of it. Neutrality is a denial of brotherhood. Those of us who insist that in no sense are we separate from what is taking place in Europe, thereby affirm the truth of brotherhood. We are so far from being separate that if my own brother were to steal and murder, I do not think I could feel more outraged or more indignant than Germany has made me feel. I should want first to thrash him and then to lock him up for an indefinite period of time. And I should want

to do this, not because I hate him but because I love him. If, in addition to his theft and to his murder, I saw him on the point of committing further murder or worse, and I had no other means of preventing him, I would shoot him without a moment's hesitation. My love of him and the honour of my family and my sense of justice—in other words, my duty to God, to my neighbour, and to myself—would all compel me to do so . . . So far from being separate, we are distressingly of a piece!"

"Have we not further proof of that interdependence in the good Karma that Germany is now making?" the Orientalist questioned. "Her very crimes have united the decency of the world against her; have, by contrast, appealed to all that is chivalrous and best in other nations capable of such response. She has helped us even when trying most to injure. The world, in that sense, is enormously in her debt. In the eternal justice of things, this must count finally in her favour. Her sons have not died in vain. The hairy back of Satan is being used once more, as by Dante, as a way of escape from Hell. The White Lodge uses the work of devils as we use stepping-stones to cross a river. By climbing over our sins the spiritual summits are gained. We were asleep, and Germany woke us. We were content with material progress, and Germany, by showing us how vile a thing material progress can be, turned our minds and hearts to spiritual values and to everlasting truths . . . It is why the powers of evil are foredoomed: their success will become their undoing. Satan himself must someday discover that the more active he is, the greater and more overwhelming must be God's triumph. Seeking to oppose, he and all his works are used by immortal powers for the accomplishment of immortal ends.

"Brotherhood, clearly therefore, is a law of life: not a sentiment, but a responsibility. Our sins may drag others down and often do. But they cannot leave others unaffected, and when the good in others is stronger than the evil in us, or vice versa, the sins committed, though invariably the cause of suffering, may, because of the suffering, turn a good woman into a saint, or a self-distrustful nation, such as France, into one that is conscious of its superhuman mission."

"The Gael has gone," said the Inquirer at this point. "I wanted to ask him what he meant by 'the foot-steps of Christ.' Was he speaking with poetic licence? Does he believe that Christ today is in some sense a real person?"

"Suppose we leave it to our Churchman to answer that question," the Recorder suggested. "He cannot speak for the Gael. But he can answer for himself, and we can criticize him if we disapprove!"

"I will try, gladly," responded our friend. "But I shall use my own terminology . . . The question, as I understand it, is:—In what sense can or should Christ be regarded today as living? Is it in the sense of a Spirit, infinitely remote; or all-pervading, endlessly diffused and therefore utterly impersonal? Or, if personal, did the Ascension into heaven mean departure from earth?

"My answer is that Jesus of Nazareth is living in exactly the same sense as he impressed on Thomas who doubted. 'Then saith he to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." And Thomas answered and said unto him, "My Lord and my God." Jesus saith unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."'

"He is alive today as he was when, after the walk to Emmaus, he tarried with Cleopas and the other disciple, and sat at meat with them, and was known to them at last by the breaking of bread.

"He is alive today as he was when, by the sea of Tiberias ('this is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead'), he prepared a fire of coals, and fish laid thereon, and bread, and gave the seven to eat.

" 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world'—not as a disembodied spirit, but substantial and human in an illimitable and glorified sense, never to be divided from the Godhead, but also perfect for ever in his manhood, the Guide, the Friend, the Saviour of all who seek him.

"So he has revealed and proved himself, from that day to this, as all his saints and children testify; for they have known him. They have known, too, that Heaven is not remote, but literally 'at hand,' seeing that in God 'we live and move and have our being,' and that wherever God is, there is Heaven. When, therefore, he ascended into Heaven, to the right hand of the Father; when a cloud received him out of sight, he neither departed from the things of earth nor deprived himself of the power to show himself to whomsoever he wills. Today, as then, he says: 'He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and *will manifest myself to him.*'

"St. Paul knew because he had seen, not once but often. Does he not tell us that the Master stood by him (not figuratively, but literally, as a tree stands) in times of crisis such as the riot in Jerusalem, and when, as a prisoner, he was brought before Cæsar in Rome? Do we not find, in every age of the Church, that the Master has been known in his humanity and has many times appeared to those who fulfilled the conditions—to those who have loved and who have obeyed him? Or to those who, by some supreme act of self-surrender, have lifted themselves momentarily above the blindness of the mind, to vision? Soldiers in battle and saints on their knees: but for the saints the intimacy is constant, and the vision of frequent recurrence. Spiritual biography is full of such incidents. It would be more full than it is if, too often, and even among those who most earnestly strive to obey and whose love cannot be questioned, there did not exist the thought, 'Impossible for me; impossible today,' as an insuperable mental barrier.

"If I convince myself that I cannot walk, I cease to be able to walk; if I am sure I cannot see and cannot become able to see, then I must

remain blind. The opposite of child-like faith and trust is not enlightenment, as a misguided intellect might wish us to believe, but is self-hypnosis and the narrowing of the universe, which is infinitely rich and boundless in possibilities, to the microscopic limits of our own past experience.

" 'Impossible for me!' This is not humility. It is self-assertiveness of the mind. It is a rejection of divine authority, a denial of Christ's wisdom. Are not we also the children of God, and did not he, our Elder Brother, assure us that if we have faith as a grain of mustard seed, we may remove mountains? Nor is this a question of removing mountains: it is a matter of becoming conscious of that which *is*,—by the conquest, primarily, of our preconceptions and mental inhibitions.

" 'We are not saints,' it may be said, 'and only the saints and the very great saints have seen the Master.' The answer is that it is the duty of everyone who calls himself a Christian to strive to perfect himself 'in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call him.' Therefore we must assume—though some will reject the word 'saint' —that those who call themselves Christians are labouring to perfect themselves, as men and women, as wives, mothers, husbands, fathers, sons, daughters, in business, in some profession; and once this is granted, it remains only to extend our understanding of what perfection means in that particular calling, to include the utmost for which saints have striven.

"Very often, also, it is at the beginning of the way that the Master makes himself most strikingly objective. It was so with St. Paul. It was so with the original apostles after the resurrection. It has been so with many of the saints, to more than one of whom, after they had come to know him intimately, the Master has said in effect that it was now no longer necessary to deal with them on the exterior planes. It is with a purpose that he reveals himself, and presumably that purpose is to stimulate effort and to draw the disciple from dependence upon the visible to reliance upon the invisible,—consciousness of the invisible preceding vision in ever 'ascending' scale . . .

"Perhaps I am talking too much and for too long: but you have started me on that which, of all things in life, is closest to my heart. His own followers have exiled him from the world. He is near,—nearer than hands and feet—and they will insist that he is far away, or obtainable only by means of a priest and the Sacraments. 'Spiritual communion' they believe in and advocate; but those who practise it are inclined in most cases to limit the results by mental preconceptions which dreadfully limit him. He it is who should be called 'the greatest of the Exiles'—exiled from his own earth by his own children; and yet, exiled only in their thought; in fact, ever present; longing to make himself known; a beggar for our human love; appearing to blinded eyes and appealing to deafened ears—'last, loneliest, loveliest' of the sons of men —some day to be recognized as King."

Our friend was striding the room. "Make no mistake," he said.

"Even as things are, he is the King! Results are in his hands. His human agents may blunder and devils may seem to win: but results are in his hands. He works for eternity and we work in time. We expect him to do things our way and he, knowing better, prefers his own which is his Father's. Therefore men, being fools and vain, say there is no God.

"But I am digressing. Your question was precise. 'Footsteps'; why not, even in the most literal sense? Poets sometimes speak more truly than they know, but I do not think the Gael is a poet of that kind. He gave me once a copy of a letter which he used to carry round with him. It was about an Order, not yet known to the world, but the most ancient of any in the West. This is an extract from that letter:

" 'Granted our unworthiness!—which one of us could ever doubt it?—yet his cry through all these ages has been, "My child, give me thy heart!" And through all this darkened world he wanders up and down, searching for us and distressed until he finds us,—as he has described himself in the parable of the Good Shepherd. What he asks of us is that we answer his call and follow; that we give him, oh! marvel of marvels, love for love.

" 'The complaint of many in the church today is that of Mary, "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid him." What comfort to these souls to find that he has been translated to a distant heaven! But let *us* remember that it was only the body of him they had laid away, and that in the garden, in the grey morning light, Mary met the Master face to face, and he spoke to her. So may it be with us. For whether or no the Master be in heaven, this of a surety, that *he is on earth,* and walks among men as truly as he walked in those old days by the Lake of Galilee! The beginner's eyes are holden that they do not see, but he calls and we may follow and find him,—not in some allegorical fashion, but in fact and in truth.' "

"I remember that letter," said the Disciple. "It is of extraordinary value. But if quotation from it in the *Screen* be authorized, would it not be possible to include a paragraph which follows, about how to begin?"

"I did not read it," responded the Churchman, "because it is not connected directly with our immediate line of thought. But I agree with you none the less. The letter continues:

" 'Where to begin, they ask? Tell them here and now, wherever they are placed, with just those circumstances, conditions, people. Each one of us is always, at each moment, in just the place best for him to be. We it is who spoil our lives fretting and fussing that they are not different, and so missing our golden opportunities, which we would perceive by cheerful acceptance and by making the most of them. We can become disciples through any and all conditions. There are no bars to discipleship save of a man's own making, *deliberately,*—and the most serious of these are want of faith in his ability, or in the Master's willingness.' "

T.

ELEMENTARY ARTICLE

IX

Faith

THE last section spoke of Love as the necessary driving power that will accomplish the immensely difficult task of self-conquest. Faith is another power, also necessary:—necessary to guide the dynamic power of Love. Indeed, it is necessary as a preliminary, to give direction to Love itself. We cannot love our Master until we believe we have a Master to love, and it is by Faith that we travel along the pathway from disbelief or doubt, to certainty about his life.

St. Paul defines Faith as the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Another definition is that Faith is the reflection in the personal consciousness of the knowledge of the Soul. The Soul knows the Master and loves him with an endless love. But we, who as yet only partake of the Soul's consciousness through the workings of our conscience and our intuitions, have but such scraps of its knowledge as we have acquired by our previous efforts towards purification and self-control. Of course it should be our object to increase our Faith, or, to put it the other way round, it should be our constant endeavor to bring about a more and more complete *rapprochement* between our personal consciousness and the consciousness of the Soul. As we do, we shall enter further and further into the life and consciousness and knowledge of the Soul. This, however, will require elucidation, for it involves the whole question of the progress and development of man.

The eternal and divine spark of life in man, at the beginning of this cycle of evolution, had acquired many great qualities as the result of previous cycles of evolution. For instance, it had acquired free-will. It also had acquired consciousness, but it did not have personal consciousness, or self-consciousness. The purpose of this cycle of evolution is said to be the acquirement of self-consciousness. In order to gain this self-consciousness, the Soul descended into matter, that is, it created in the physical world of manifestation, a simulacrum of itself, endowed with its own life and powers, in which it could see itself reflected, and so gain self-consciousness. Another way of putting the same thing is to say that it wanted to acquire personal consciousness, therefore it created a personality, this same simulacrum of itself.

Then trouble began. Having endowed its "double" in physical life with its powers, its life, its consciousness, its *free-will,* the double took the bit in its teeth, and began to violate spiritual law. It—the double—invented self-will,—and Evil and its attendant, Pain, came into being.

Readers who remember the earlier articles in this series, will see how we have travelled around a circle, and are now back at those fundamental statements about life with which we began this series, but we now have a further explanation of why those statements were true, and *how* they were true. I said then that in the process of becoming self-conscious through the exercise of free-will, we broke many of the laws of God. This made barriers and limitations which clouded our vision. But these barriers and limitations contain within themselves their own antidote, which is Pain; Pain,—the friction caused by rubbing our wills against the Divine Will,—the whip used by Life to drive us back upon the Path.

All of these great processes of evolution can be expressed in many ways. It is perhaps obvious that in the earlier articles an effort was made to explain them from the standpoint of the personality. The first part of this article endeavors to express the matter from the standpoint of the Soul. I shall try to elaborate this point of view.

Let us imagine a Soul, or a reincarnating Ego, or a spiritual Monad, or whatever name we may wish to give a unit of Divine Life, at the beginning of evolution, acting under the impulse of universal law. It has consciousness, but no self-consciousness—no personality, which it is its destiny to acquire during the coming period of outer activity or manifestation. To acquire self-consciousness, or personality, it was necessary to create for its own use, and by its own power, out of a portion of itself, as it were, a human being, a center of activity on the outer plane of manifestation, the physical world. This it endowed with its own life and power and gifts. It was, in a sense, itself. Or, from the point of view of the human-being, it is, in a sense, the Soul. But only in a sense; for, although created by the Soul, out of a portion of itself, it is not and could not be a complete embodiment of the Soul, for the Soul can only be completely embodied in a very different kind of personality, one that is the product of millenniums of evolution. Jesus of Nazareth was a completely embodied Soul, and there have been a few others. The Saints were fairly complete embodiments of Souls, and every would-be disciple is a partial embodiment of a Soul, more or less, according to the stage of progress reached.

Going back, however, to the beginning, it is obvious that each Soul, while only partially incarnated in its personality, is still wholly responsible for that personality, responsible to the universe for its good and bad deeds, for its every act and thought. It is the creator of the personality, and it is responsible for its creation. It is the Soul's life and force which give the personality its opportunity to exist, and the Soul is held to strict accountability for the use made of its powers by the personality. Moreover, it is a ray of the consciousness of the Soul,

incarnating in the personality, which unites it with Divinity, and which gives it the opportunity for immortality. Above all, it is the free-will of the Soul, incarnated in the personality, which gives the latter power of choice between good and evil, and which leads to all subsequent complications and trouble. It was not necessary for the personality to sin. It could have accomplished its purpose, and enabled the Soul to acquire self-consciousness, personality, without sinning. But having free-will, as it had to have in order to be a perfect mirror of its parent, the Soul—having the right of choice; having the ability to act, the personality chose to disobey the law of the spiritual world, and so sin, evil and pain were born.

Thenceforth, the original purpose of enabling the Soul to gain self-consciousness necessitated the purifying of the defiled and sinful personality from its sins. To these two accomplishments all the powers of the Soul, all the powers of the Universe, have since been devoted. Progress is slow, for the personalities still have the ability to sin, still have the power of choice between good and evil, and still too often choose evil. The sins of the past have created barriers and limitations which make the task more difficult. As a Soul, at each new incarnation, must send forth from itself, something of its own life and consciousness and power, to vivify and inform the new personality, so it must gather together and mould into the coming man, all the threads and effects of all its past incarnations. Fortunately it is also able to endow the new birth with what has been gained from the struggles and efforts of the past. It does not use raw material. It uses the material, good and bad, as it has been shaped and moulded by the past.

Filled with an intense desire for self-conscious reunion with the Center of Divine Life, it broods tenderly, yet firmly and sternly, over the new-born product of its own past. It guides, directs, controls, in so far as it is able. How far it is able to do this is measured by the closeness between the nature of the personality and its own nature. It is the whole purpose of evolution to make that likeness complete.

Is it not obvious that as the personality becomes more and more like the soul in its nature, that more and more of the Soul can express itself in the personality, that as they grow alike, they grow indistinguishable, for after all we must not forget that the life and consciousness and power of the personality are portions of the life and consciousness and power of the Soul, and as the body and other parts of the personality become more and more fitting instruments for the use of this life and consciousness and power, more and more of them can be incarnated.

As the personality purifies its body and its psychic nature, more life and power can safely be entrusted to it; as it purifies and disciplines its will, more will can be given to it; as it raises its habitual consciousness, it reaches nearer and nearer to the point where its consciousness and the consciousness of the Soul become one. There is, in a word, a gradual merging of the two entities, until the two become identical. Long before

the process has been completed, the man has entered upon the path of discipleship, and when the process is completed he has become more than man.

The Soul, with its inexorable purpose to acquire self-consciousness, by merging its full life with the life of its personality, knows that it can do this only when it succeeds in purifying and perfecting its personality to a point where it partakes of its own divine nature. It knows that its personality is full of impurity, full of evil, and that these must be eradicated. So before birth it plans each life for the purpose of training the personality. It places it in incarnation in an environment that, inevitably and naturally, will throw its weak places into relief and compel the exercise of corresponding virtues. It disciplins, directs, guides, encourages, stimulates, admonishes, punishes, as the case may be and as circumstances warrant. It is *itself* that it is training, from one point of view, from *its* point of view. The point of view of the personality is often very different! It usually thinks that it is having a beastly hard time of it, and that some perverse Fate is busy making it miserable. But the Soul knows that its goal, and the future life and happiness of the personality, lie along the same path; and that even if the road lies uphill throughout all the way, even to the very end, yet that there can be only one end, and this end justifies the means used for its accomplishment. The merging of the consciousness of the Soul and the personality is the only true immortality, and immortality is worth fighting for, worth suffering for, even when the suffering is dumb and the effort is not consciously directed. So the Soul takes small account of the likes and dislikes, the prejudices and opinions and preferences of the personality. It *knows* what is good for both and it pursues its purpose with that serene inflexibility which is a quality of the spiritual world.

By a rather round-about path, we have come back again to Faith, which we defined as the reflection, in the personality, of the knowledge possessed by the Soul. We can see now what an important part Faith must play in the evolution of a Soul, or a personality, if you prefer. The personality has to do things to itself, has to do violence to many of its tendencies and preferences and desires, before it can raise its consciousness to the point where it can be merged into and be reunited with the consciousness of its parent, the Soul. Its Will to do these difficult things, the driving power back of its efforts, may be fear, may be hope of reward, may be love of the Master, but, whatever the reason, it must have *Faith* in the thing itself, in its future, in the possibility of attainment, before it can make the effort that is required. Old Thomas à Kempis, when moralizing upon the evils and annoyances of existence said, "I do perceive, O Lord, that patience is a very necessary thing." Cannot we who have made this rapid survey of the evolutionary process also end our article by saying that we do perceive that Faith is a great and very necessary quality, without which the personality has small hope of reaching its reward?

C. A. G.

REVIEWS

Two recent books, both by eminent men whose opinion carries well-earned authority, give a new insight into the literature and thought of ancient Egypt. Such strides have been made in the last decade by modern research and scholarship that our age-long ignorance of Egyptian civilization bids fair to be replaced by so realistic and accurate an historical reconstruction as will be without parallel in any other field. The peculiar climatic conditions have preserved records as in no other known part of the world; and the deciphering of these records is rapidly becoming possible, checked by comparisons with anthropological and archeological discoveries. Some definite conclusions and historical tendencies are now emerging from the mass of facts collected from these many sources; and attempts are therefore being made to establish with greater exactness the whole course of the life of this great, mysterious people.

The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians, by E. A. Wallis Budge of the British Museum gives one aspect of their activity; while the *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt,* by Professor James Henry Breasted, is a carefully worked out analysis of the documents presented in the other work. Mr. Budge's book should therefore be read first, especially as it contains an excellent summary of the sources and descriptions of the texts and actual records, which knowledge is taken for granted by Professor Breasted. There are about two hundred and fifty pages of actual translations and interpretations, comprising the body of Egyptian literary remains. Mr. Budge offers but little comment, leaving the stories and poems to speak for themselves. Some are purely literary in form, and are obviously intended for the reading public. The rest are purely religious, and bear the same relation to literature *per se* as do our canons of the mass and other liturgical rituals. Both are dull reading except to the student of comparative religion; and we doubt if Egyptian gentlemen had only these few fragments of true literary works to enliven their leisure hours. What little we have, however, is so full of human interest, humour, and a high degree of artistic perception and appreciation of beauty, that one is compelled to remember that there is "nothing new under the sun," and that Wordsworth is by no means the last word in Nature poetry. It takes a little effort to become accustomed to a strange phraseology, but once done, the flavour of Egyptian thought and feeling can gradually be assimilated, affording a novel and pleasant experience, and the glimpse of a completely new intellectual vista.

Professor Breasted has attempted something much more ambitious and difficult. He has not merely placed before us a large body of collected texts (fully one-half his book is direct quotation from original sources, selected and ably combined), but he has attempted to penetrate to the essence of Egyptian thought and religious feeling; and has also given us the first consecutive sketch of the development of a religion believed in and lived, by his reckoning, at least three times as long as Christianity, and practically ending some hundreds of years before Christianity began.

In the nature of things Professor Breasted could not be expected really to interpret the Wisdom literature of Ancient Egypt, some of whose Mystery-rites

he has before him; but he has at least directed the attention of the thinking world to the fact that vital religious ideas and teaching lie within and behind the sometimes crude symbology and mythology of the available texts. To the Theosophist there is much that is suggestive in the passages cited from some very ancient sources bearing on the "Ka" of a man; as a comparison, for example, with the *Voice Of The Silence,* will show. For this ka, created in the beginning by the God, is a "second figure, identical in external appearance" with the individual; corporeal though of finer substance; and acting as guiding genius and interpreter to the personality of those things pertaining to life after death and the future needs. In some way it was counted as an achievement to "reach" or be with one's ka, and it is often said of great souls that they are "going to" their ka. Originally a tradition that only princes had kas—derived perhaps from the days of initiate kings—the belief extended, with the increase of a democratic ideal, to all the people, and everybody was supposed in some way to be possessed of them; until finally the name became stereotyped for that of the resurrection body. These changes are traced by Professor Breasted, the ka representing in his interpretation the "inner man" of the individual, his heart, soul and highest thoughts; —"the heart of man is his own god" as one Pyramid text puts it.

Whatever else students of the subject may be able to find, this book has at least given us the threads of what has been discovered of the recorded Egyptian beliefs and also what seem to be their initiation-rites, so that a comparison of these with the spirit and rites of other religions may well enable us to bind up the loose ends into one coherent whole.

One amendation of Professor Breasted's work suggests itself. If we correctly understand Madame Blavatsky's chronology, texts here assigned to the Pyramid Age, or about 2800 B. C., should really be pushed back an additional eight or nine thousand years; and similarly texts dated at 3500 or 4000 B. C. should be correspondingly and proportionately still more ancient.

Of the positive work accomplished much could be said. *The Book of the Dead,* hitherto barely translateable and little understood because so much reconstructing of the symbology had to be mere guesswork, has now become almost a new work. With a range of newly translated and edited texts covering thousands of years preceding the *Book of the Dead,* it falls naturally into place; and in Professor Breasted's opinion contains but a fragment of real Egyptian teaching, and that of the later, degenerate, and by no means most vital or interesting part.

Another point of interest is the change that the Egyptian religion underwent before the later days of its degeneration. With the importation of Osiris from outside, which succeeded because of his popularity with the common people, we get the period of greatest simplicity and at the same time, traditionally, of glory and splendour that Egypt ever had. The whole scheme of life both here and hereafter became "Osirianized," and the change can be clearly traced. Whatever connection this may have with the immigration of Atlanteans when their home commenced to sink before 12000 B. C. remains as yet unestablished; but the astonishing achievements of archeology may yet unravel this problem when more about Atlantis has been discovered.

One feature of Professor Breasted's book deserves special mention, and that is his openmindedness and freedom from prejudice. He is genuinely seeking the truth, and any conclusions are not impossible provided they fit the facts. This spirit will do more to recover the lost history of Egypt and her glory than any amount of scientific investigation along the older and more dogmatic lines.

JOHN BLAKE, JR.

The Land of Suspense: a Story of the Seen and the Unseen. Elsewhere in this issue we have given a review of *Letters from a Living Dead Man,* under the title of "An Unattractive Heaven." *The Land of Suspense* deals with the same

theme, the after-death experiences of an "average" man, who was not bad, but who had done many things he should not have done, and which he knew he should not have done. He does not go to hell; he is not bad enough for that; but he does experience a state of consciousness which he does not enjoy, and in which he remains until he realizes fully the mistakes and sins of his past, and is sincerely sorry for them.

The spirit of the two books is entirely different. There is not a ray of spiritual feeling in *Letters from a Living Dead Man.* It is brutally materialistic, in spite of its occasional approximations to the truth. *The Land of Suspense,* on the other hand, while not perhaps any closer to the facts, does at least deal with the situation with feeling and, for want of a better term, we might say, in a spiritual way. It is not offensive and does not violate our instinctive canons of good taste. That is saying a good deal of books on this subject. It is worth reading and is published by Edwin S. Gorham, New York. C. A. G.

*A Little Pilgrim** is another book dealing with the after-death states, and quite the best of the three which are reviewed in this number of the QUARTERLY. It is religious, and that is saying a good deal. The pictures it gives are, to be sure, as unattractive and unappealing as even the orthodox streets-paved-with-gold Heaven; but at any rate, they are not offensive or repulsive.

Why is it that no one as yet has been able to imagine and describe a Heaven that a sensible person would want to go to? Next to the Utopias of earth, the celestial Utopias are the most impossible places; they would bore us to death in a few years. Is it, perchance, because our minds and imaginations are so fearfully unlike the minds and imaginations of the denizens of Heaven that we are unable to imagine a Heaven that we should like? What is our idea of Heaven? What would you, dear reader, like the after-death state to be? Have you ever thought about it and tried to construct a picture that would satisfy you? Try it, for it is a self-revealing process.

Mahomet faced this issue squarely and frankly by making Paradise a place of sensuous delights. He thought of everything an Arab of the desert liked, and promised them the quintessence of that; gardens, flowers, plenty of fruit and other food, and above all, an unlimited supply of houris, each more beautiful than the last. It might do for awhile, but, after say, a few hundred years, one would get tired of eating and drinking, even in the company of lovely houris. What then?

The *Little Pilgrim's* Heaven is not open to this type of objection. It is not coarse, she is described as being happy. Happiness and joy are said to be the conditions of the place, but she spends much of her time in tears, and most of the people she meets have secret sorrows. They also weep and are waiting for something they want; some friend who has not yet joined them; some comrade who is in Hell, for there is a Hell and it is a very horrid place indeed.

As a matter of fact, while this reviewer does not pretend to know what Heaven is like,—he humbly suggests that it will differ for every human being—it may not be too bold to express the opinion that in certain important particulars the Little Pilgrim's Heaven is true to fact. The inhabitants are not unqualifiedly happy. Why should they be? Is any one entitled to unqualified happiness who is not unqualifiedly good? Secondly, the inhabitants have things to do, have work assigned them. It is difficult to conceive of any Heaven that would not include the doing of work, useful work, and I trust it is not profane if one finds playing a harp outside of this category. They do not play harps in the Little Pilgrim's Heaven but they do things almost as banal. Particularly unsatisfying is the second part of the book, describing the City of Delight. It is less enticing and distinctly cruder and more material than the earlier states.

* *A Little Pilgrim.* Little, Brown & Co., Boston.

But it is the account of Hell that is really interesting and which shows the most highly developed imagination. There is no doubt that the place would be very unpleasant indeed. I wonder why we can picture a variety of hells which we would hate to go to, but cannot imagine a Heaven we should like. Is there any special significance in this? If so my intuition tells me that it is not a flattering one!

What is Heaven, anyhow? What do we mean by it. In simple terms, I think we use the word to describe the after-death state of very good people. What do we know about it?

Common sense would suggest that we go to the records of very good people and consider what would make them happy and what their after-death experiences are likely to be. If we do this,—if we consult the biographies and autobiographies of the Saints, we find a remarkable unanimity of opinion as to what constitutes final happiness. It is love, such a depth and intensity of love, that it becomes ecstasy, that one loses one's sense of self.

Have we not a clue here as to why we cannot imagine a satisfactory Heaven? It is because we do not as yet know how to love with sufficient intensity, and not being able to imagine or realize the actual experience of those in Heaven, we fail, very naturally, to picture a condition that we would find satisfactory. Heaven is the apotheosis of love—and Hell is its absence. C. A. G.

Dharma. The arrival of this magazine, published quarterly by the Branch of the Theosophical Society in Venezuela, is always a welcome reminder that the flame lit by Mr. Judge, more than a quarter of a century ago, is still burning clearly and brightly. Throughout the magazine there is the spirit of loyalty to Mr. Judge and with it a true understanding of the principles on which the Theosophical Society is founded. The constantly increasing number of the standard theosophical books that are being made available through translations into Spanish is in itself a testimony to the growth and strength of the movement in South America.

The current number of *Dharma,* attractively printed on excellent paper, contains eighty pages of original articles and carefully selected translations from the works of Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge, Mr. Johnston and the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY. As with the QUARTERLY the articles cover a wide range and appeal to many different types of mind. They include parts of Mr. Johnston's translation of the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali,* and Mr. Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me,* a selection from Cavé, the marvellous article, "War seen from within," by Men-Tek-Nis, a full report of the convention of the T. S. in New York last April, as well as a number of interesting original articles.

A reading of the magazine leaves a member of the New York Branch with a strong desire to make the acquaintance of his brothers in Venezuela.

J. F. B. M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION 193.—*Can Theosophists consistently say the Apostles' creed?*

ANSWER.—I think so. As in all things one has one's own understanding of the meaning of what one says. A. F.

ANSWER.—The Theosophic method, as I understand it, is founded on the fact that no mind can contain the whole of Truth and, conversely, that in every opinion sincerely held there is something of truth. Spiritual Truth transcends the mind and can not be expressed in mental terms without some distortion and error as a result of trying to impose the limitations of the finite mind on the Infinite. On the other hand a formula that for centuries has expressed the faith of countless thousands must contain within itself much truth, much Divine Wisdom. A theosophist is interested in finding the truth, not the errors, and in the tenets of every religion should see more truth, not less than is seen by its untrained adherents. Was it not Mr. Judge who said that a theosophist should put his circle of vision around the ordinary man's, containing and expanding it?

The more of a theosophist a man is, the more at home he should be in every religion and the better able to say, for instance, the Apostles' Creed. And this does not mean that his broader vision makes his faith less clear-cut and definite but more so. It means that he has gained the power to recognize, behind its many forms, Truth in its essential unity. J. M.

ANSWER.—One is tempted to answer this, Yankee-fashion, with a question: "Can any one other than a student of Theosophy use the Apostles' Creed?" and this is advanced seriously. So long as my thought was held within the narrow bonds of separatist dogma I could not use the Creed with conviction. Since I joined the T. S., and especially since I became a regular reader of THE QUARTERLY, I have not only used the Creed but accept it with a simple literalness that the Church alone never succeeded in giving me, so long as its teaching seemed apart from the soul and its efforts to become self-conscious, and, especially, apart from our Lord as a living Master. G. V. S. M.

ANSWER.—As the answer to this question must depend on what meaning the different clauses of the Creed has to him that says it, the proper answer can only be given by the man himself. It is evident that if there is a clause in the Creed which a student of Theosophy does not agree with, then he cannot partake in the saying of it. But to another student the same clause may hold a different meaning, which to him stands for something very deep and holy. The ministering clergyman, and many of the congregation may interpret the clause in quite a different way, but this does not interfere with the student's saying of it any more than the many ecclesiastical mistakes and misinterpretations of the teachings of Christ and St. Paul interfere with his attitude towards the Church as a whole.

T. H. K.

ANSWER.—It seems to me that this question is one that everyone must answer for himself. Perhaps it is not impossible to give the words a meaning that a "Theosophist" can agree with, but I am afraid no "Theosophist" can consistently say the Apostles' Creed with the meaning our Church gives it. HJ. J.

ANSWER.—Why not? I do; and I try to be a Theosophist. And, strange as it may seem, being a Theosophist enables one the more consistently to say the Apostles' Creed. I see nothing in the Apostles' Creed inconsistent with the life and thought of a Theosophist,—worthy the name. Is there anything in the creed against Toleration in Religion? "The principal aim and object of the Theosophical Society is to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color." "In essence the Society is intellectually an attitude; practically, a method; ethically, a spirit; religiously, a life.' (*The T. S. and Theosophy,* H. B. Mitchell, p. 9.) L. C.

ANSWER.—I do not see why Theosophists cannot say it consistently. If you ask whether a Theosophist will utter the words with the same meaning as a boy who has just been "confirmed," the matter is different. A professing Christian may believe in the resurrection of this mortal body: the Theosophist does not. But the words do not define what body is to resurrect: and it is at least open to the Theosophist to utter the words while reserving to himself what he conscientiously regards as their inner meaning. And as with this, so with other passages. A. K.

ANSWER.—I have been told that theological text books (Protestant and Catholic) call the Creed *symbolum fidei,* a symbol of faith. May it not be possible that consistent Theosophists find the Creed a satisfactory symbol of the faith that is in them? T. A.

ANSWER.—There are two ways of approaching any creed or statement of belief, each being represented by Churches within the Christian fold. The first, represented by the Roman Catholics, have pushed a concise and definite interpretation of each word and phrase of the creed to its utmost limit. They have made a science of dogmatic expression; and have established through centuries of intellectual labor a school and tradition that attempts to be absolutely rigid in its conclusions. Only a proficient in this school, trained in this particular way, believing that the Church and Christianity are one, could hope safely to state *his* orthodoxy of belief. This Church is content to require, therefore, of the lay majority no more than a verbal assent to the results achieved by other minds, by this professional school of interpreters. The layman says "yes" to any question asked demanding an assent, and he is admitted as a member of that Church. In addition to this the majority of Catholics are trained from children to make this assent, quite aware that the intricacies of theologic debate are beyond their attainment: they are relieved of responsibility.

The other method, represented in varying degrees by the many Protestant Churches, is in essence still comprehensive. The effort is made to maintain some authority, to limit the freedom of belief to at least certain essentials (so-called), and yet to avoid that rigidity of formulation which excludes evolution or growth. The result of this has been too much in the direction of license of belief—that is—no real belief at all; but that a proper balance is now rapidly becoming possible is due to the fact that each method has been tried, and found wanting. Here is the opportunity for a new ideal, a clearer and truer vision of the truth, a return, in fact, to the method and vision given us by the Master Christ.

Theosophy stands for an absolutely open platform of belief, no dogma, no creed, no formula. But this does not mean that Theosophy stands for nothing,

has no belief at all. It means that the Theosophist is in reality bound, not by a man-made formula, but by the searching test and standard of all Truth, of the great White Light that floods all the world of science, art and religion itself. If he humbly but boldly dares to measure himself up to this standard, he will not fail of belief; nor of action also. And among other acts he will see the necessity for the first of the subsidiary objects of the Society—"The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies, and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study."

If he should turn to a study of the Creeds, their origin and interpretations, he will find an essential *oneness* in them. The Roman Schoolmen were, after all, mystics at heart, as a study of Thomas Aquinas at first hand will reveal. These schoolmen were only endeavoring to express the great truths of the Christian religion in theologic terms; and they did this better and more accurately than most of us could do if we attempted a statement of our beliefs. Both the Roman and the Protestant Churches state that the Creed is an "ecclesiastical symbol," and that there is a "relative *difference* between the ecclesiastical and the Christian, between the letter of the symbols and their spirit, between form and idea." Martensen, who is a Lutheran, but whose work is the text-book assigned for priests in their preparation for ordination into the Protestant Episcopal Church, states very clearly, in his *Christian Dogmtaics,* that any symbol (he specifically treats with the Apostles' Creed) is an inadequate formula of belief. There must be more than mere assent to a formula. "We intend to hold that *type* of sound doctrine which is therein contained. . . . By the *type* of Lutherism we mean its ground form, its inextinguishable, fundamental, and distinctive features. . . . Therefore, while dogmatic science on the one hand holds to the Church creeds a relation of dependence, it must, on the other hand, in this relation be free to pass critical judgments on the formulæ of the symbols, and also to exhibit the fundamental ideas contained in these symbols in a fresh form, corresponding to the present stage of the development of the Church and of theology." We "must regard orthodoxy as something which not merely is, but is yet to be, attained," and we must by "a constant spiritual return to Christ" acquire "the gift of being able to try spirits" (cf. I John IV: 1).

There is nothing in this to which a true seeker after Divine Wisdom cannot assent. He is given almost complete freedom in his interpretation of the Creed,—but a freedom subject to Christ himself. The Creeds no longer stand as barriers; they become, rather, channels which direct and sustain our thought as it seeks the Master. Members of the Society would do well not to condemn the Churches unheard, and because they are ignorant of the facts. They *can* say the Creed "consistently" if they have honestly gone to Christ for its truth, and have not merely accepted off-hand the loose, popular, traditional explanations.

JOHN BLAKE, JR.

QUESTION 194.—*What is the real meaning of "Opportunity" in relation to Karma in our lives, both in the world and as would-be Theosophists?*

ANSWER.—One who would be a Theosophist must take all circumstances and events in life as opportunities. The work of Karma is also, I believe, to give us opportunities to learn. HJ. J.

ANSWER.—As Karma is the law of cause and effect, and acts on all planes, "opportunity," in relation to Karma in our lives in this world, would mean a chance to balance accounts for previous misdeeds. By doing something right and fair and true, we might compensate for some wrong we had done, perhaps in a previous life. In doing the wrong of long ago we caused as a effect in this life, conditions or ties which hold us until we have made compensation. Our

oportunity would be the chance to pay our debt, and thus free ourselves from the debtor's bond, the undesirable conditions in which we had imprisoned ourselves and others.

As Theosophists our work, or use of opportunity, would be on the spiritual plane which we know to be the plane of causation. There we should not so much balance effects as create new causes, which would occasion desirable, helpful results for others, as well as for ourselves later on. A. F.

ANSWER.—"Opportunity" may mean "Light on the Path,"—in the world and for would-be Theosophists.

Opportunity in relation to Karma may be a "stepping-stone to higher things." It may be a "stepping-stone of one of our 'dead selves.'" Opportunity may mean the payment of a debt (not necessarily financial), incurred in some previous existence. "Because things are unpleasant, that is no reason to be unjust to God." —VICTOR HUGO.

To a would-be Theosophist, opportunity, whether in the guise of pleasure or of pain, is Karma. "When we reach that state wherein the adjustment of the finite in us to the infinite is made perfect, then pain itself becomes a valuable asset. It becomes a measuring rod with which to gauge the true value of our joy." (*Sadhana,* Tagore, p. 63.) L. C.

ANSWER.—Opportunity may be a possibility brought around by law—a possibility of working off and getting rid of evil tendencies started long ago. A soul of undisciplined will may incarnate in an environment that gives frequent exercise to violent temper. That environment is the soul's opportunity. Violence of temper is an outward symbol of an undisciplined inner state. By accepting this fact the soul may work off its Karma—get control of itself. G. E.

ANSWER.—Our lives both in the world and as would-be Theosophists should merge and gradually become the same. In the process—a long one, perhaps—we learn how to time our acts and thoughts in accord with the principles of Theosophy and the Rules of the life of the Soul. All our energies are then so manifested. In the process, come the moments of choice. We can act and think in accord with those principles and Rules or we neglect to do so. We can continuously centre our attention on them or we do not do so. Such moments of choice are, I think, our opportunities in relation to Karma. A. K.

ANSWER.—Opportunity seems to be a point where we have the chance, if strong enough, to obtain a clearer vision of the Master's own vision or plan for us, and hence for a more direct course of life in pursuance of this plan. Karma and the Master work together to guide us, direct and pilot us through the maze of our wilful, stupid, and also blindly virtuous actions, until we reach a place where we are able to see for ourselves some hint of the direction which our lives ought to take, and so begin to co-operate. The Lords of Karma are masters of detail, and it would be a mistake for us to think that opportunity only comes at most a few times in a life. On the contrary, each moment, each instant of thought and feeling is an opportunity. And until we learn to avail ourselves of these little opportunities, and to choose rightly in them, the larger opportunities cannot in reality exist for us, because our evil habit has doomed us to failure. Increased activity means increased responsibility, which means greater opportunity. But this also means opportunity for greater failure as well as for greater achievement. So we must safeguard our lives by "eternal vigilance," piling up the good forming habits which can carry us safely through some crisis of action. Would-be Theosophists have a double responsibility, not only as related to their own development, but as inheritors of a trust given but once a century to our fellow men. They should above all others not *wait* for an opportunity, but *make* each and every moment an opportunity. JOHN BLAKE, JR.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

NEW YORK BRANCH OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

PROGRAM FOR 1915-1916.

The following topics will be considered in the order in which they are printed, but as the discussion of a subject may occupy more than one evening no definite assignment of topics to dates has been made in advance. At the close of each meeting the topic for the next meeting will be announced.

TOPICS.

Zeno, one of the ancient Greek philosophers, made a three-fold classification. First, things that are good; such as Courage, Justice, Temperance. Second, things that are bad; Cowardice, Folly, Injustice. Third, things that might be good or bad according to the use made of them. This third class of variables included certain pairs of opposites, such as,

Health,	Disease,
Wealth,	Poverty,
Pleasure,	Pain,
Noble Birth,	Low Birth,
Life,	Death.

This classification will be the subject of discussion in the meetings of the New York Branch this season. The following questions suggests points for consideration.

I. What light do Reincarnation, Karma, the Seven Principles of Man, and the Occult World throw on this classification?

II. Is health ever injurious? Is disease ever beneficial? How so? How can the benefit be extracted from obscure mental and nervous cases (a) for the invalid; (b) for his family and friends? Is Christian Science (or Mental Science, or Divine Science) a manifestation of religious aspiration or the reverse?

III. Is poverty always an evil? Is unequal distribution of wealth an injustice? Are there any legislative remedies? Is great wealth an evil? Is it wrong to live on inherited wealth which one has had no share in acquiring?

IV. How can life and death be of variable benefit? Are war and peace variables also? Is taking the life of a fellow man ever justifiable?

V. What is loyalty? Why should there be loyalty to a nation? What is a nation? Do such political divisions militate against the Brotherhood of Man? What gives to courage, justice and honour their high value? To what extent is our conception of them merely the "social" or "class" instinct? What are conventions?

VI. If life and death, as Zeno implies, are merely tools, what is it that uses them? To what end? How far ought one to go in attempting to arouse another

to the meaning and purpose of life? In our own experience what has been used to arouse us?

VII. Is evolution the unfolding of a spiritual purpose? If so, what are we to do about it? To what extent can a man change his character and temperament?

VIII. Is there a spiritual world? If so, are we conscious of it? What are

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A LETTER FROM THE FRONT.

NEAR THE TRENCHES, FRANCE.
NOVEMBER 6, 1915.

The Theosophical Society, 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

SECRETARY T. S.:—Thank you so much for my October copy of the T. S. QUARTERLY, which arrived a few days ago, being forwarded from England. It is a splendid issue, and amid all this noise and strife, brings back the true meaning of one's mission in life. Tho' I am a staunch American, I felt it was my duty to actively support the Allies against the "Enemies of the Light." I could not be neutral, and bitterly deplore that my country has not put herself on record as positively opposed to such methods and ideals as Germany represents today. The love of ease and money has, I fear, taken the place of our national honor, so dear to us in the past.

As I am in the artillery I have to witness often terrible slaughter and destruction, but the words of Krishna to Arjuna always comes to me, and I then feel that I am only an instrument of the absolute, and must play my part in this tremendous drama as such.

When the war is over I hope to return to New York, and be an active member in the Society.

With very best wishes to yourself and the T. S., I remain,

H—— B——.

P. S.—We can be a Theosophist even during the stress of a battle—it is not merely an "arm-chair philosophy," thus proving its tremendous value in any crisis of life.

NOTICE

The division of work in the Secretary's Office, referred to in the Secretary's Report, requires some changes in the handling of the mail, to ensure prompt attention. Members and subscribers are requested to take note.

(1) All correspondence about books or about the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, should be addressed to,

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(2) Dues, donations and other remittances for the T. S. should be addressed,

TREASURER T. S.,
P. O. Box 64, Station O., New York City.

(3) General T. S. Correspondence, and applications for membership should be addressed,

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159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.